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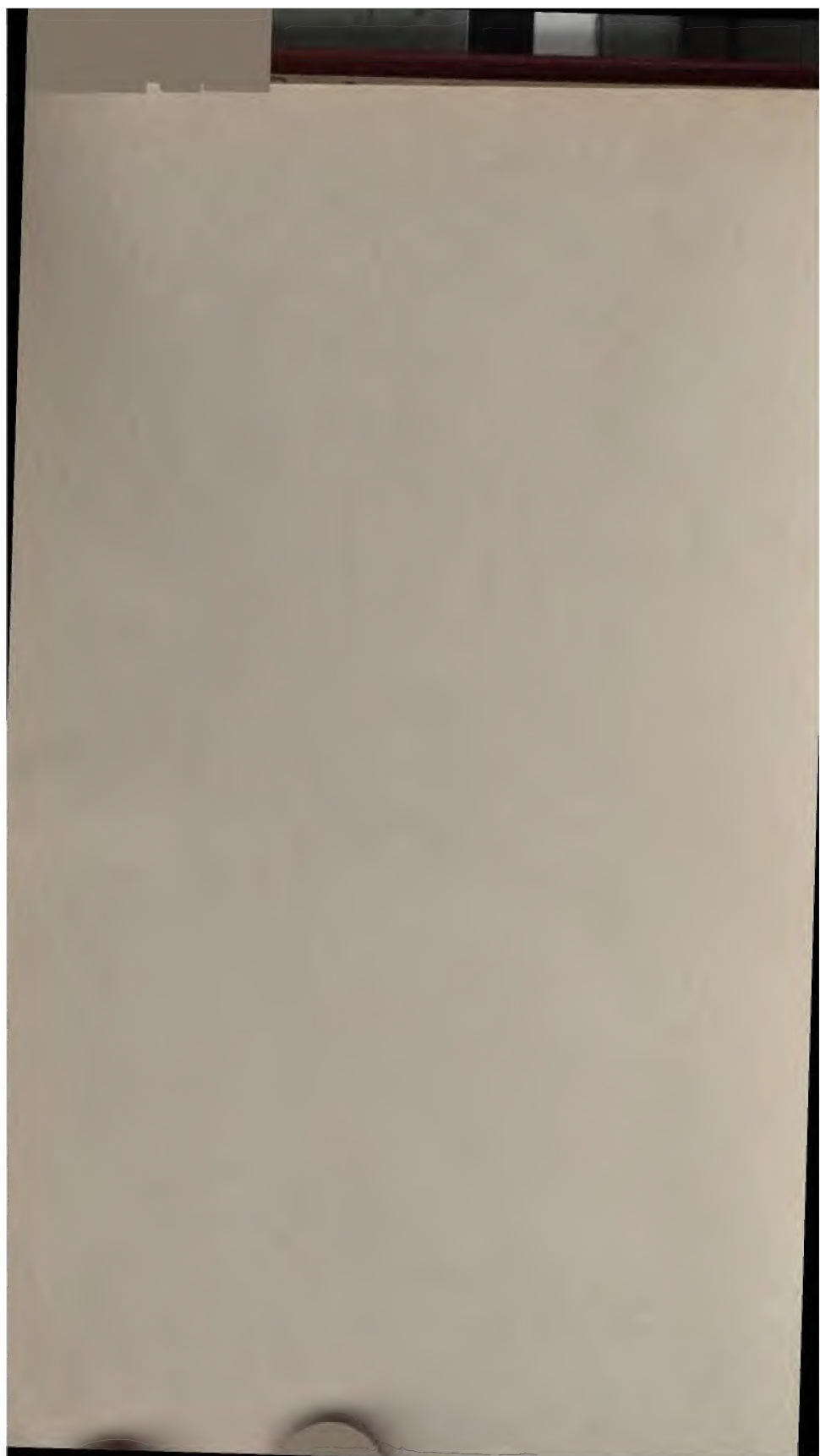


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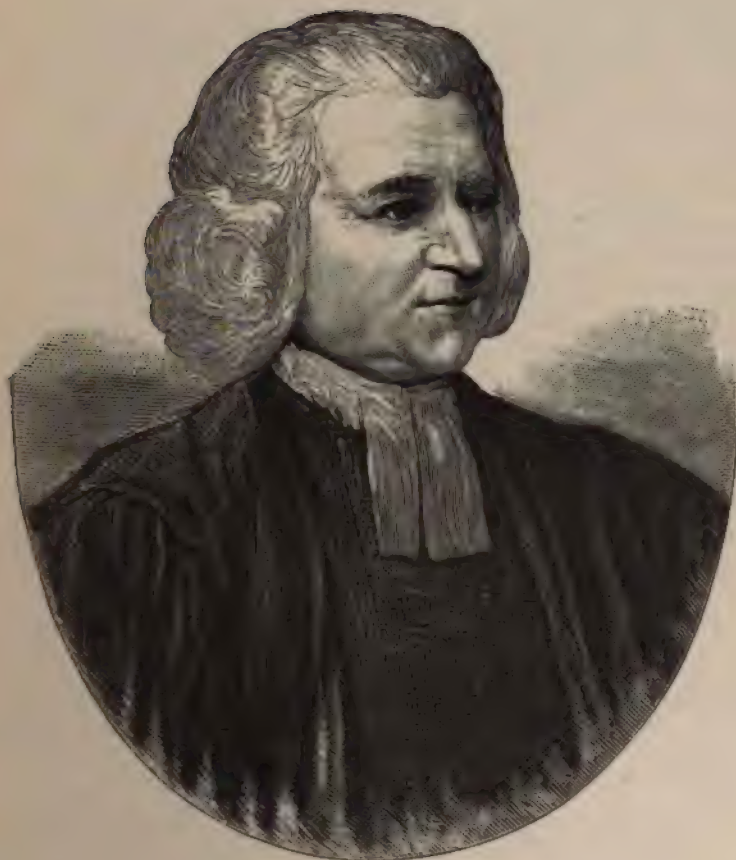


C. Wesley









*C. Wesley*







THE  
ILLUSTRATED

# History of Methodism

IN

GREAT BRITAIN AND AMERICA,

FROM THE DAYS OF THE WESLEYS TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY

**REV. W. H. DANIELS, A.M.**

AUTHOR OF "MOODY: HIS WORDS, WORK, AND WORKERS;" "THE TEMPERANCE REFORM  
AND ITS GREAT REFORMERS," ETC.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY BISHOP HARRIS, D.D., LL.D.

*Illustrated with over 250 Engravings, Maps, and Charts.*

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OFFICE OF THE METHODIST QUARTERLY REVIEW,  
805 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, *Sept.* 22, 1879.

REV. W. H. DANIELS, A. M. :

Your "ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF METHODISM" is written with an accuracy, a life, and a freshness which will, I think, insure it a deserved and wide-spread popularity. The numerous engraved illustrations, fresh from their originals, aid to give reality to the narrative. Every Methodist who has not the time for reading Dr. Abel Stevens' great work should read yours. And not only Methodists, but all Protestant Christendom is interested in the wonderful revival, of which Wesley and Whitefield were leaders, and will find rich entertainment and quickening power in the perusal of your pictorial history.

D. D. WHEDON.



## PREFACE.

---

DURING the last hundred and fifty years that little band of young men at Oxford derisively called "The Holy Club" has grown into a world-wide Christian communion. Its regular clergy numbers twenty thousand, its actual membership over three millions, and its adherents about twelve millions of souls.

Methodism is supernatural. Such historic marvels as the Empire of the first Napoleon may be accounted for on natural principles, with a liberal mixture of the infernal; but the rise of this vast religious empire cannot be referred to the operation of any laws or forces known to state-craft or philosophy: science did not discover it, logic did not deduce it, kings did not will it, nor legislators enact it; but, like the new Jerusalem of the Apocalypse, it came down out of heaven: a divine benefaction of spiritual light, and joy, and power.

To worthily record the sweep of this divine movement would require the inspiration of a prophet and the experience of an apostle. Human sight is too slow to discover, and human speech too weak to portray, the majesty and glory of this work of grace; and whoever thoughtfully approaches such a task must ever be oppressed to think how far this theme transcends his powers.

Another embarrassment is found in the immense mass of historic material which has accumulated in the archives of the Church. Hundreds of volumes, and almost countless pages in other forms, both written and printed, invite the research of the student and claim the attention of the historian: though this embarrassment partially disappears when he discovers to how great an extent his predecessors have reproduced the same materials in different forms.

Why then reproduce them still again?

To this question there are several replies. In the first place, it had become painfully evident to those in charge of the literature of our Church that her glorious and helpful history was generally neglected. The able and stately volumes of former authors have evidently been thrust aside by the mass of other and lighter reading constantly kept before our people, especially our young people, and it therefore became the plain duty of the official publishers of the Church to make an effort to restore its history to its lost place in popular attention and interest. With this end in view the present work was projected.



Again, a marked change has taken place in the historic methods since the voluminous works of Bangs and Stevens were written; new material has accumulated; the rapid improvement of the engraver's art invites its more liberal use than in any previous volume of Church history. In view of these facts it has been the endeavor of the Church authorities charged with such duties to furnish her people with a book which, by its freshness and beauty, as well as by its vigor and compactness of style, should attract them to the study of characters and events at once the most delightful and important.

To say that the size of this volume does not admit of even the briefest sketch of all our distinguished men and women is far below the truth. No work of any practical size could contain so much. God has so abundantly blessed our Church in this respects that the effort to record his bounty to Methodist minds and hearts would be like attempting to gather up and set forth the work of the sunshine and the rain upon this fruitful land of ours. Only a few representative characters and careers among the multitudes which, if they were not so many, would any one of them be worthy of a volume, can possibly find place in these pages.

The author is under especial obligations to the Rev. Mr. Tyerman and Dr. Smith for the assistance he has found in their large and admirable works; as well as to the Rev. Dr. Jobson, the Wesleyan Book Steward, for the ample literary and artistic materials supplied. The American side of this volume owes much to Drs. Bangs and Stevens, to Bishop Simpson, from whose admirable "Cyclopædia," by the courtesy of the author and publishers, valuable literary and artistic matter has been obtained, to the leading literary men of the Methodist Church of Canada, and to the numerous biographers of our deceased celebrities, whose labors are almost oppressive in plentifulness and excellence. To the brethren who so cheerfully aided the author in his tour of research among historic scenes and places he here again expresses his thanks.

The annals of Methodism have long been a favorite study with him who now attempts to collate and record them. In a retrospect of his work there are portions of it which he wishes might have been done better; but he feels no twinge of self-condemnation in view of any known unfaithfulness or neglect. Others might have done better; he may do better in the future by the help of this additional experience; but he has certainly given himself unreservedly to this work, and done it "heartily as unto the Lord." May the Lord and the Church be pleased graciously and indulgently to accept it at his hands.

W. H. DANIELS.



## INTRODUCTION.

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HAVING been requested to write an introduction to the "Illustrated History of Methodism," about to be published by our Book Concern, I most cheerfully comply; because I am in full accord with the general drift and purpose of the book, and more especially because I deem it of the first importance that our people should give more attention to the study of our history as a Church.

Methodism is not a new system of philosophy, ethics, or theology; neither is it a mere method in religion, as its name might imply. It does not belong to that class of institutions which can properly be said to be "founded" by any one, as dynasties or schools are said to be founded, by this adventurer in politics, or that reformer in religion; and the author of this volume is right, as it seems to me, in saying that John Wesley was "as much the product as the promoter of Methodism." It was not John Wesley who founded Methodism so much as it was Methodism which founded John Wesley. The tide which bore him on in his wonderful career was one of those outpourings of waters such as the Prophet saw in his vision; "first ankle deep, then rising to the knees, then to the loins, and finally waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over." May God give to the Church a realization of the words of the angel who showed him the vision, and who said: "And every thing shall live whither the river cometh." Ezekiel xlvii, 9.

Wesley, before his conversion, was an ardent youth, capable of organizing and conducting a Holy Club; which, however



fell to pieces on his first considerable absence from Oxford; but he was no more capable of planning and leading the great exodus of British souls out of State-Church formalism than was Moses, just after he had finished his studies in the schools of Egypt, capable of leading a nation of slaves out from among the brick-kilns. In each case it was God's good pleasure that the people should go out, and he raised up and trained a leader for them; but the real leader, in both cases, was He who dwelt in the fire and in the cloud. Neither Moses nor Wesley knew one day the pathway they should travel the next, and the most and best that can be said of either of these men is, what Paul says of himself: they were "not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Acts xxvi, 19.

The author of this volume has drawn the portraits of his characters with a free, bold hand. It is somewhat of a surprise to find among some of the illustrations which so admirably adorn these pages the portrait of the great John Wesley as a very boyish-looking young man; for most of his admirers never think of him as less than sixty years of age. His ritualism, also, during those early years in which he had such a "troublesome soul on his hands and did not know what to do with it," is placed in full and striking contrast with his experience and views after his conversion; a contrast somewhat startling to those who have never had any other than a general idea of the man; but which is true to the life, and useful withal, as showing that Wesley was what he was in the days of his power, not chiefly by means of his great talents and culture, but only by and through the abundant grace of God. They fail to understand him who speak of him as the "founder of Methodism." As well might the Apostle Peter be called the founder of Pentecost.

It is a matter of great satisfaction to me, and I trust it will be to the Church at large, that the author, in these



pages, gives special prominence to the missionary spirit and history of Methodism, both in his account of the British Wesleyans, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It has come to my knowledge that certain detractions have been attempted against the workings of our Missionary Society; I wish, therefore, to say what my opportunities of observation enable me to say intelligently, that never since Methodism was planted in this land did our Church make more rapid progress in new fields than it does to-day: it is my sincere belief that the work of God moves on now as rapidly and efficiently in the missionary circuits and stations of our Church along our vast frontiers as it did when the frontiers were east of the Alleghanies.

In our foreign missionary fields the same comparison holds good. There are as many sinners from among the heathen in India and China converted and brought into the Methodist Episcopal Church, in proportion to the outlay of labor and money to that end, as there are from the regular Methodist congregations in New York, Philadelphia, or elsewhere in the United States. Or, to state the case in a financial way: it may be said that a dollar will go as far in the work of saving sinners in either our home missionary or foreign missionary circuits and stations as it will in our oldest and most favored localities in this land; and in no period of our history were results any greater in proportion to the outlay of labor and money than they are to-day.

In this work Mr. Daniels has seen proper to depart, in one noticeable instance, from certain fashions which some former writers have followed. He tells us that the heroic age of Methodism has not yet passed away—a statement in which I concur, and which I wish most heartily to indorse. It is not necessary to undervalue the present race of Methodist preachers in order sufficiently to honor the fathers; and it is



a historic mistake to set forth the difficulties with which the fathers of our Church were obliged to contend as entitling them to a monopoly of heroic honors. If the privations, dangers, and sufferings which are cheerfully endured on our mission stations, in the destitute portions of great cities, in wild mountain regions of the interior, and in our border work both West and South, could only find a pen to write them and a voice to tell them, the story would be every way worthy a place beside that of the pioneer Bishop himself and of his glorious itinerant compeers.

Methodist preachers do not lie on the ground and sleep in the woods on their circuits in New York and Pennsylvania, for the simple reason that there is no occasion for such conduct; but they are doing this very thing yet in Western and Southern fields. Men are not mobbed and murdered in Maryland and Virginia for doing the work of a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church, but they are mobbed and murdered in Georgia, Alabama, and Arkansas. If any doubtful brother is anxious to know whether there is still a call for heroism of the old stamp in the Methodist ministry, let him volunteer for some of our frontier appointments; and he may be able to satisfy himself, within a very brief space of time, that *these* are heroic days—martyr days, even—of Methodism, as truly as in the closing years of the last century.

Our Church has never yet been frightened from its duty by difficulties. However hard the work, or however great the danger, there have always been eager volunteers for the service; and such, no less than heretofore, is the state of the case to-day.

At the risk of being misunderstood, though the fact is plain enough, I should like to call attention to what the author in this volume calls "The overflow of Methodism." For many years the social *status* of our Societies was such that



there was a constant temptation for persons who were converted among us to unite with some more popular body of believers; and thus the figures given in our Minutes from year to year have not shown the whole number of conversions which have blessed the labors of our preachers and people. No accurate statement of this constant overflow can ever be made, but the movement has been considerable and important, and while we have grown less rapidly because of it, other denominations have been strengthened and cheered thereby. Perhaps, also, the doctrines and methods of our sister Churches have through this agency been somewhat modified and inspirited. If so, we give thanks to Almighty God.

If Methodism were able to claim all its own it would probably be superior in numbers to all the other orthodox Protestant bodies in America put together: a state of things which would neither be good for us nor for our neighbors. No insignificant portion of the best working talent of other denominations has been under Methodist tutelage. We judge this large class of Christian workers to be all the more competent and effective on this very account, and we have no sympathy with those who accuse Methodism of some inherent weakness because it does not always retain in its own communion all persons converted at its altars.

A word ought to be added as a just commendation of this latest and best work of the author, whose accounts of other great religious movements have been so widely circulated and read, and which have proved so great a blessing, both in England and America. He has done his work well—faithfully, loyally, wisely, lovingly. May it be approved by the great Head of the Church, and be a great and lasting blessing to our people.

WILLIAM L. HARRIS.



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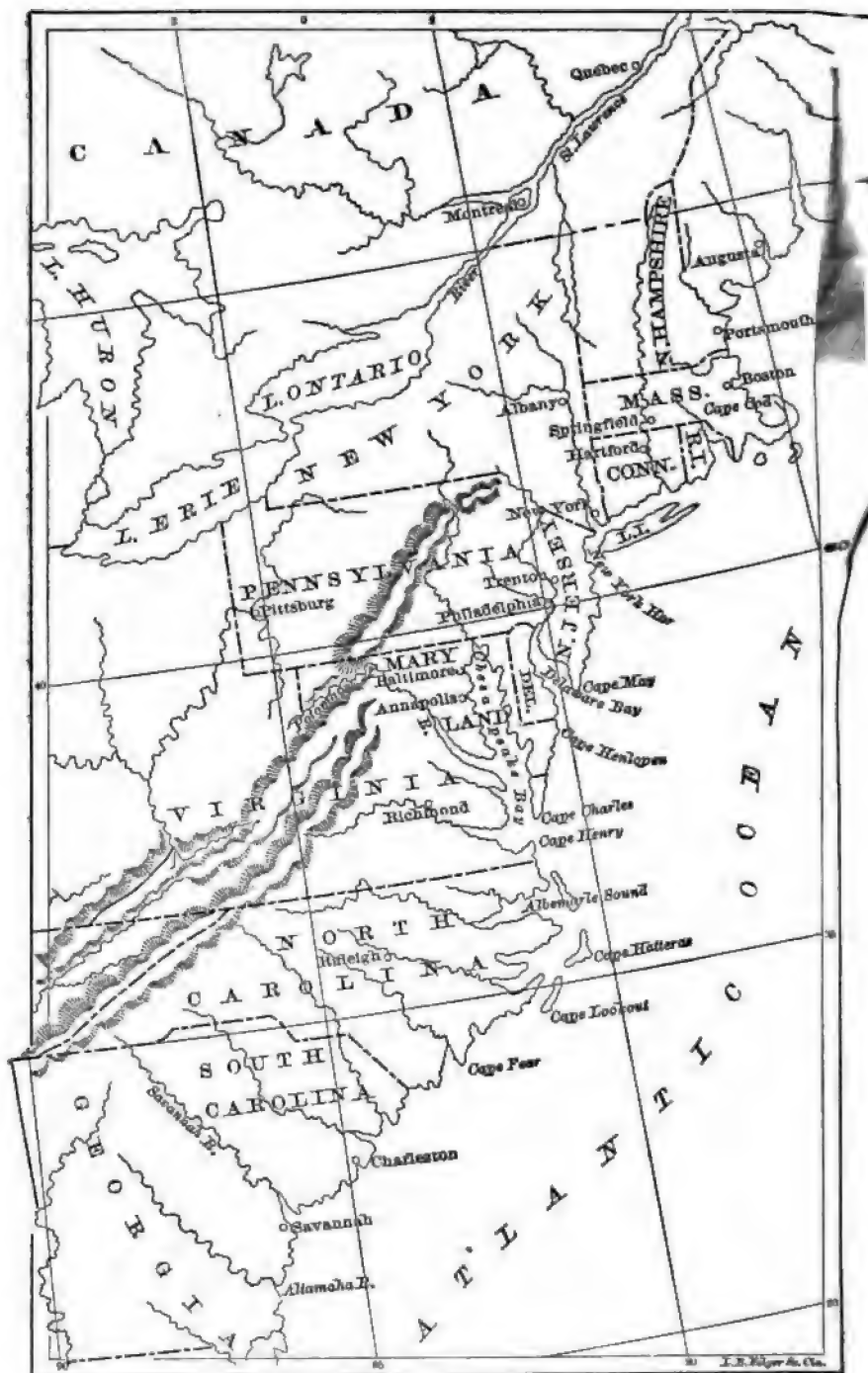
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MAP OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.



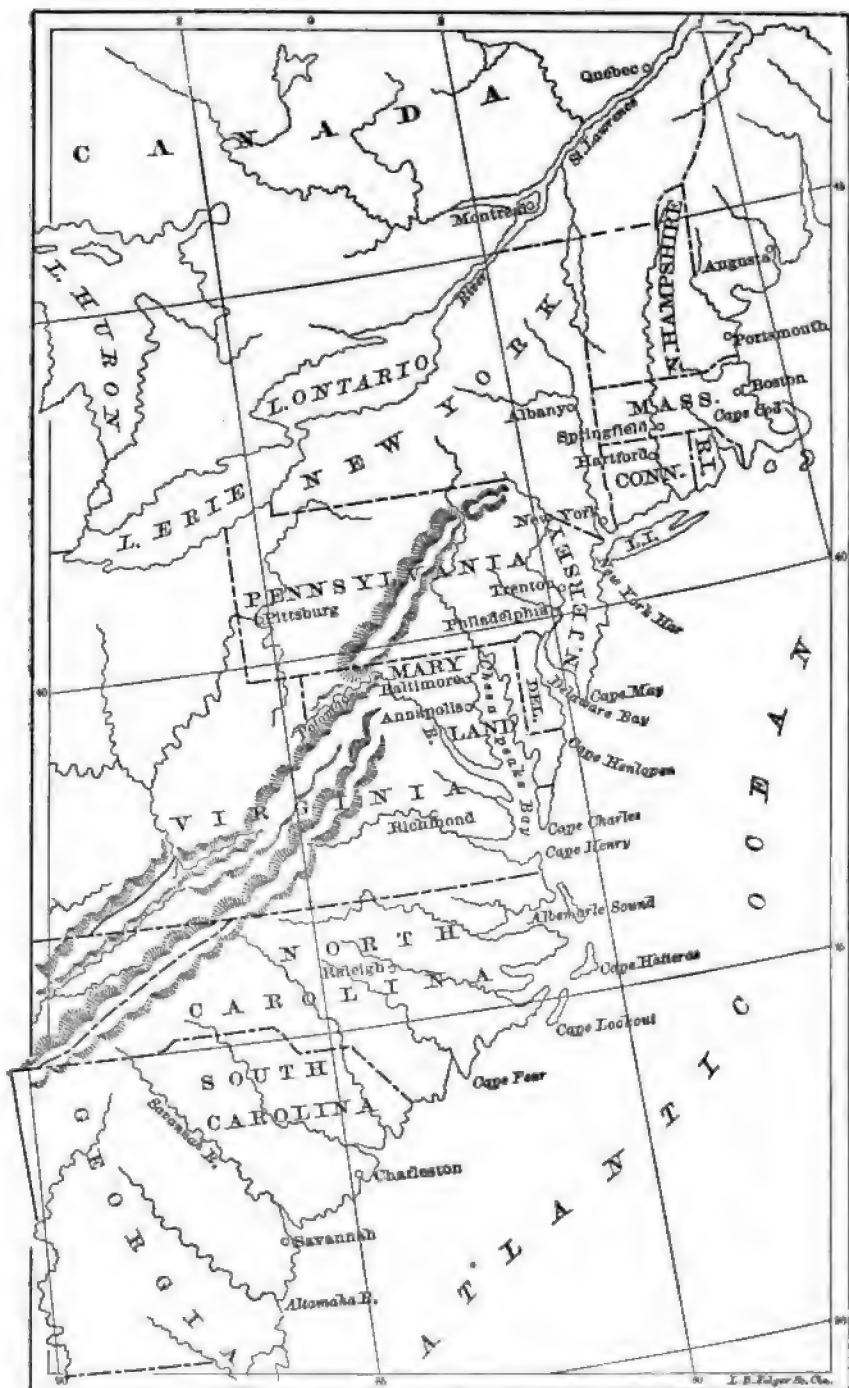


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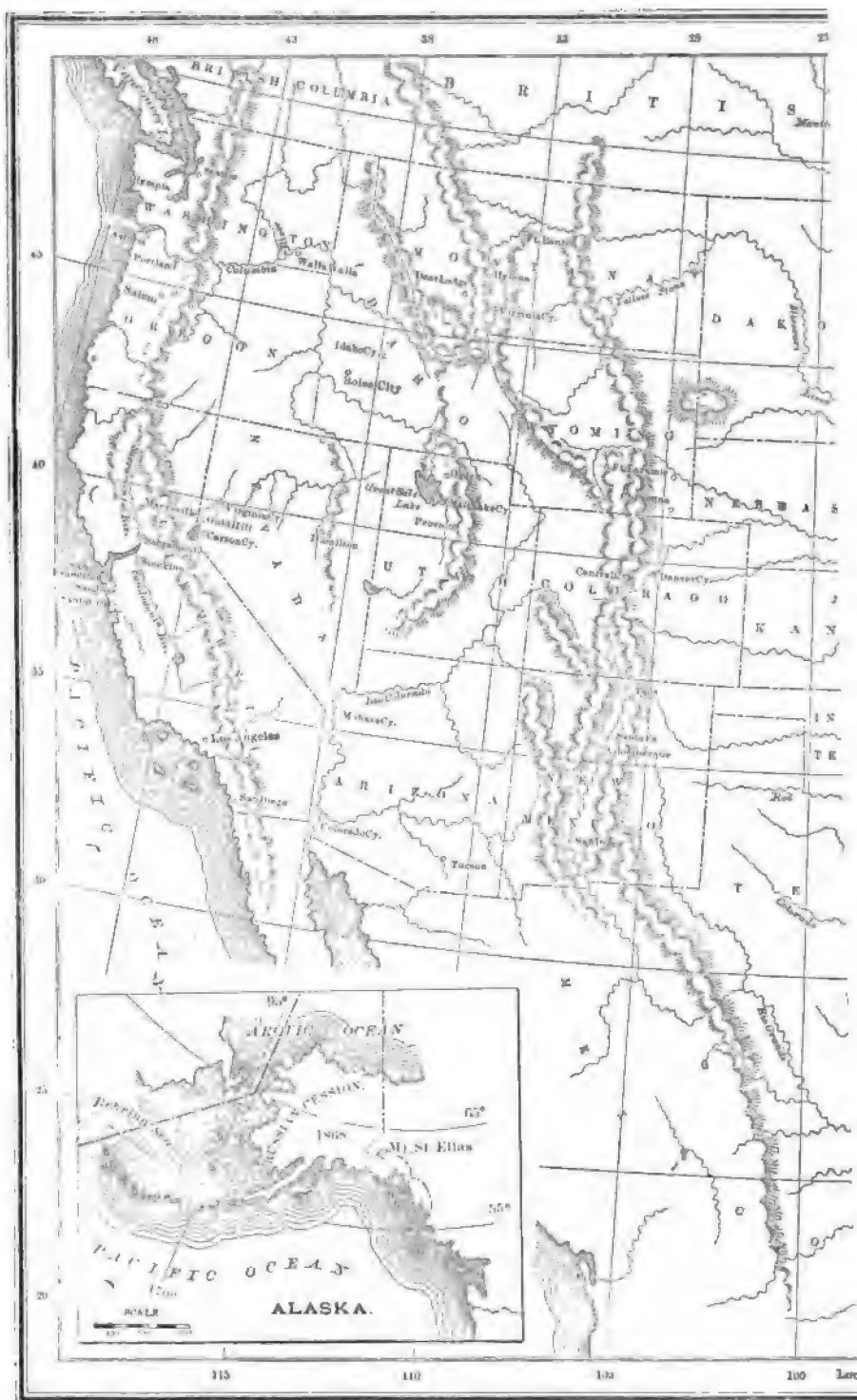


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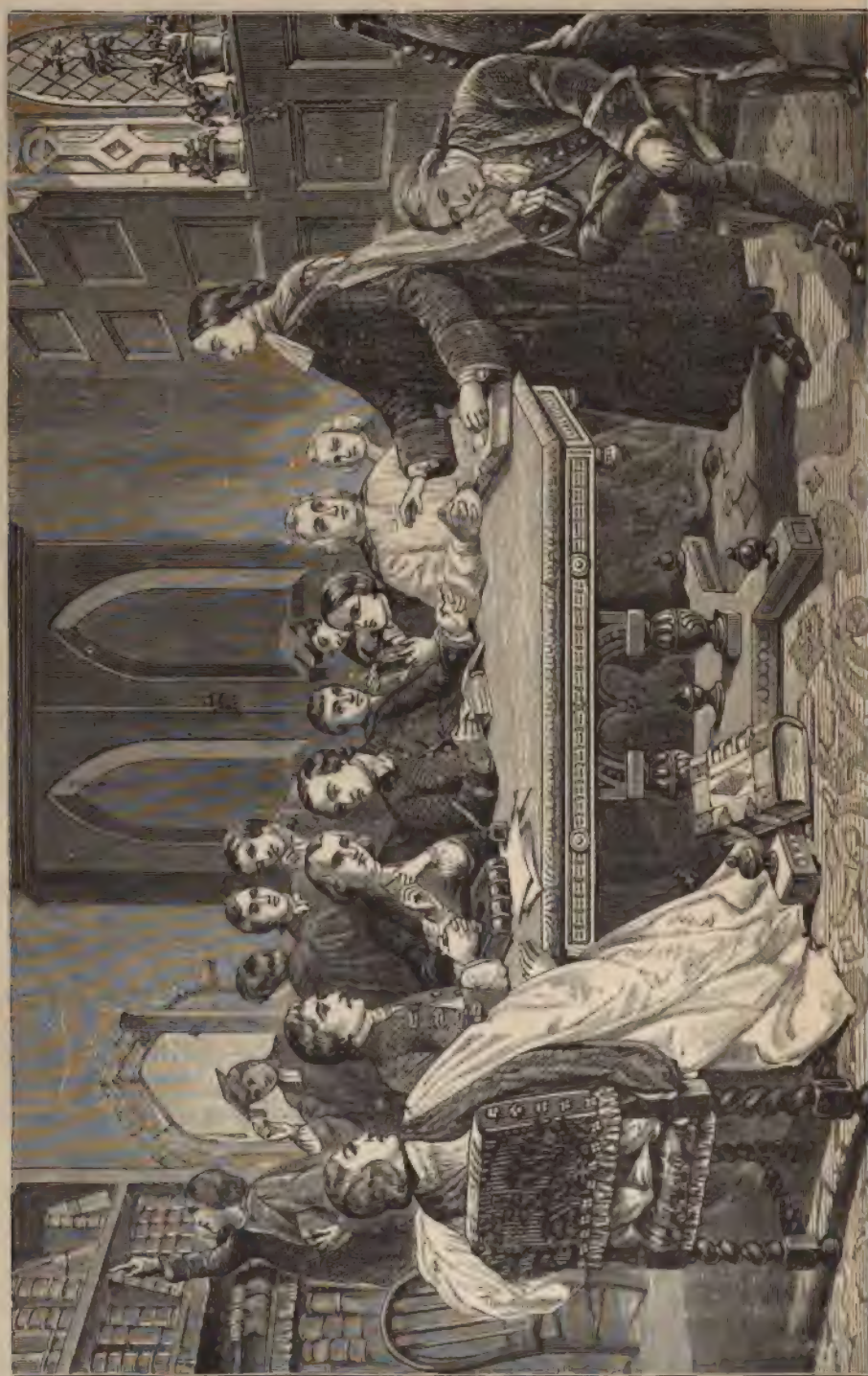




PART I.

WESLEY AND HIS TIMES.







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VIEW OF OXFORD.

## CHAPTER I.

### ENGLAND AND HER CHURCH IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

THE history of Methodism opens in the latter part of the year 1729, at the University of Oxford, England, where four young men—John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Robert Kirkham, and William Morgan—had banded themselves together for mutual assistance both in scholarship and piety.

There was need enough of such mutual help, for at that day scholarship and piety were the two most unusual attainments among university men. To improve their minds these persons agreed to spend three or four evenings in the week together in reading the Greek Testament, the Greek and Latin classics, and on Sunday evenings, divinity; to improve their souls, they adopted a set of rules for holy living, including the exact observance of all the duties set forth in the Prayer Book of the English Church, besides such others as they were able to invent for themselves, all of which they kept as strictly and religiously as if they had found them laid down in the book of Exodus or Deuteronomy. Their exceptional diligence in study, and their still more remarkable sanctity of manners, soon



brought down upon them a storm of ridicule and abuse, and the name "Methodist" was flung at them in derision on account of the clock-work regularity of their lives—a name destined to become a title of honor, and to stand for the largest spiritual communion of Christians in the world.

**England Under George II.**—This was in the third year of the second of the Georges, a prince alike deficient in mental capacity and moral worth. In those days it was not the fashion for kings to practice the Christian virtues: indeed, the almost universal profligacy of royal courts would indicate that it was regarded as the high prerogative of kings and princes to break all the ten commandments, and the more frequently they did so the more did they display their dignity and power; since nothing could be a greater proof of royalty than a fearless disobedience of the law of God. English historians agree in condemning the manners and morals of the reigns of the four Georges; yet it is but just to set over against the repulsive pictures which they draw the still more infamous scenes which were constantly witnessed in the Roman Catholic countries of Europe. Bearing in mind then the fact that, with all its public and private abominations, Protestant England in the eighteenth century was a vast improvement on the England of any previous age, except during the Protectorate of Cromwell, the actual state of the kingdom, its rulers, its people, its schools, and its Church as compared with the Christian England of to-day may be studied with interest and profit; as showing how great a need still existed in this foremost country of Europe in religion, intelligence, and morals, of such a spiritual reformation in its religion as that with which Great Britain was blessed under the leadership of that chief of all the great reformers, John Wesley.

This was the money era. There was nothing which could not be bought or sold. From the reeking royal court down through all the upper orders of society there was one long carnival of luxury, licentiousness, and display. Gold lace, velvets, brocades, and jewels were the current substitutes for virtue among women and honor among men; and with such examples set them by lords and ladies the poorer classes—sometimes also called "the lower classes"—of society, made all haste to fill themselves with pleasure by defiling themselves with sin.



In 1736 every sixth house in London was a gin-shop. The sign-boards of inns advertised to make a man drunk for a penny, dead drunk for two pence, and promised straw to lie on while he was getting sober. From these dens of iniquity bands of young men would sally forth by night for a drunken frolic, and commit every sort of depredation upon the persons and property of peaceable citizens, sometimes even torturing them with their swords, breaking heads, splitting noses, and submitting both men and women to the vilest possible indignities. The capital swarmed with desperate and shameless adventurers, plotting how to fasten themselves and their families upon the Church or the civil list, or picking up a precarious living as professional wits; telling vile jokes or sing-



A BIT OF OLD LONDON.

Orange Court, Drury Lane, about 1740.



ing lewd songs, not only in ale-houses and bagnios, but also in the assemblies of polite society.

The ignorance of the common people was another curse of the kingdom. In the year 1715 less than twenty-five thousand of the children of the poor were sent to school; being only about one fourth of the number of scholars now in the Wesleyan Methodist day schools of England, to say nothing of the schools connected with the other communions.

As for law, it was plenty enough, but justice was far more rare.



OLD LONDON BRIDGE.

The prisons were full to bursting; and there was a public hanging every week, by which large numbers of sinners, great and small, were assisted out of the world without perceptibly improving it. Neither the Tyburn gallows, nor the array of heads newly cut off for treason—with which it used to be the custom to decorate Temple Bar and the gate-way of old London Bridge—availed to frighten the people

into good behavior, since it was evident that what was called Justice in Great Britain was chiefly a means of protecting the king against his subjects, and defending the rich against the poor.

**The Church in England, versus the Church of England.**—But where was the Church all this while?

On the throne, in the person of the king; in the court, foremost in intrigue; in the House of Lords, where bishops hob-nobbed with peers of the realm; in grand cathedrals splendidly endowed; in fat livings all over the kingdom; in all the resorts of pleasure and fashion; but not among the surging throngs of common sinners, who were so sunk in ignorance and atheism that they hardly knew, or boldly denied, that they had any souls to be saved. The Church of England, like that of Laodicea, though proud of its traditions, its wealth, and its power, was “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Its wealth and offices were constantly prostituted to personal and political



ends. For royal favorites and zealous partisans it had titles, benefices, and preferments; for the masses of the people it had little else to give, in return for the conformity and the tithes it exacted, except the forms of the holy sacraments, and a liturgy which might almost as well have been in papal Latin for any good the unschooled rustics could find in it as it was drawled or rattled out by some half-starved curate, while his rector was giving himself up to a life of rural pleasure or courtly intrigue.

It is true, the Lord had a few faithful servants both among the clergy of the Establishment and the ministry of the Non-conformists Churches, but for the most part both priests and people were not only destitute of the power of godliness, but also of the form thereof.

In studying the history of the great Methodist revival, and its relation to the communion within which it commenced, it should not be forgotten that Christ has a Church *in* England, which is not *of* England; a Church older than Henry VIII.; older than Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury; older than the paganism of the Saxon conquest; older than the Romanism of the papacy. There were Christian Churches, and Christian martyrs too, in Britain long before that very prudent prince, the Emperor Constantine, could make up his mind to break with the Roman idolaters and allow himself to be baptized. There were British Christians, scattered by persecution among the Scottish highlands and the mountains of Wales, hunted by pagan Britons, and afterward by pagan Saxons; persecuted, now by Romanists in the name of the Pope, and now by Anglicans in the name of the King—these are the people from whom has descended the true Anglican Church. The Church *in* England is spiritual, the Church *of* England is political; the one is from heaven, the other is of men; their historic lines sometimes cross each other, but they seldom coincide for any great length of distance or time.

**Outline of English State-Churchism.**—A brief sketch of the career of the Church *of* England, as distinguished from the Church *in* England, though not essential to this history, will greatly assist in understanding many of the events which have a vital connection with the Wesleyan revival.

In the year 596 England was Romanized by Augustine; not the Saint of that name, but a Roman monk who was sent by Pope Gregory



the Great to take advantage of the marriage of the heathen King of Kent with a Christian princess. This marriage was the beginning of political religion in England.

"Strangers from Rome" was the title by which Augustine and his forty monks introduced themselves to King Ethelbert—Romans first, and Christians afterward—and when they had made a Roman and a Christian of the King, his subjects dutifully followed him, and as many as ten thousand of them are said to have been baptized in a single day. Here beginneth the royal headship of the Church *of* England.

The monks now turned their attention to converting the pagans in other parts of the British islands; using mild measures at first, such as sprinkling the temples with holy water, taking down the idols Thor, Woden, and other Norse divinities, and setting up images of Roman saints; all this with a view to convert these British temples into Romish churches, and to displace the pagan by the Christian form with the least possible shock to the pagan mind. It was this politic Roman monk, Augustine, who, in the French city of Arles, in the year 597, was consecrated by Pope Gregory as the first Archbishop of Canterbury, and Metropolitan of England; and chiefly along his line of policy and prelacy, with varying fortunes, but with always the same flavor of statecraft about it, the Church *of* England has ascended to our day.

From the beginning of the eighth to the middle of the sixteenth century the power of Rome over the English nation had increased, until the papal sanction was necessary to the settlement of all political, as well as spiritual, questions. The high offices in the English Church were at the disposal of the Pope; spiritual courts were established for the trial of "spiritual persons," whereby all crimes, murder not excepted, became frequent among ecclesiastics, for whom, so far as human law was concerned, any iniquity was safe; and so greedy were they of filthy lucre, and so successful in accumulating it, that at one time nearly half the wealth of England was under their control.

**The Reformation** under Luther, which promised so much for Europe, produced only a temporary impression upon the Church of England. Protestantism did, indeed, set up a new system of doctrine and discipline, which was a vast improvement on the ever-multiplying heresies of Rome; but the Reformation soon lost its power as a religion by aspiring after, or rather groveling after, political supremacy.



Meanwhile, Henry VIII. of England projected a Reformation of his own. He had special use for a Church as well as for an army and navy, and in his hands the one was as much a political instrument as the other. In 1531 this infamous prince was proclaimed by his obedient convocation of English bishops as "The only and supreme lord, and, as far as the law of Christ permits, even the supreme head of the Church of England;" and in 1539 his Parliament passed an "Act for Abolishing Diversity of Opinions," by which those who ventured to



OLIVER CROMWELL.

hold different notions of faith and practice from those set forth in his royal manifesto were condemned "to suffer the pains of death as felons," or to be "imprisoned during the king's pleasure."

In the new liturgy which Henry's obedient clergy composed for his Church in 1548, occurs this prayer:—

"From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities, good Lord, deliver us!" Yet, after centuries of intrigue,



martyrdom, and murder, England had simply freed herself from the great Roman pontiff and set up a little pope of her own.

But Henry's Church was born to trouble. England was too rich a prize to be easily wrenched from the grasp of Rome, and hence it was that the kingdom swung back and forth from Anglicanism to Romanism and from Romanism to Anglicanism again; making, on one of these journeys, a detour off into Presbyterianism; but, having had too much of Cromwell and his roundheads, who must needs erect their religious opinions into a State Church like all the rest, the nation, after various religious contortions, lapsed into a condition of disgust at all religion; at least, all political religion; and there was mournfully little religion in England at that day of any other sort.

The path of the Church of England is plentifully stained with martyrs' blood as well as with that of a meaner sort; yet even this is void of power or praise to the political Church of the kingdom, since the fagot and the ax have served at different times in the name of the official religion, now to punish one form of faith and now another. The people of England have been marched to prison in platoons, like coffles of slaves to the auction block, and some of



PROCESSION OF RELIGIOUS CRIMINALS ON  
THEIR WAY TO PRISON.

her priests and bishops have been beheaded or burned "for their religion;" but with every martyr's memorial which one may meet, set up in honor of those who have sealed their faith with their blood, it is needful to inquire on account of what particular form of faith this particular martyr

died—for so many different reasons, in its crooked course down the centuries, has the established Church of England murdered men and women. Under the Romish system the State was held to be the creature and servant of the Church; in Protestant England, since the days of Henry and Elizabeth, the Church, *i. e.*, the Establishment, had for the most part been the servant of the State. The old kings were treated



like little deities, whose food and wine must be offered on bended knee ; now they were prelates, whose opinions in religion, inspired by scheming ecclesiastics, constituted the orthodoxy of the Church, and whose will was, presumably, the will of God.

The apostasies and martyrdoms under the varying forms of Church law, which followed the accession of Papist or Protestant kings and queens, served still further to corrupt the morals of the kingdom. There was, indeed, an "Act of Toleration," which permitted Non-conformists to maintain their own forms of worship on condition that they should also support, financially, the established religion of the State ; but in their eyes its worship was no worship, its ministry was no ministry, its sacraments no sacraments, while, on the other hand, they were denounced by the Church party as rebels, blasphemers, reprobates, in a state of sin and misery, and in danger of eternal damnation.

One deep and lasting impression, however, was made upon the people of England by these politico-religious oscillations, namely : hatred of the Pope. The reign of "bloody Mary," from 1553 to 1558, when Papacy was the State religion, aroused the wrath of the English people to such a degree that on her death and the accession of Elizabeth in the last-named year, the triumph of Protestantism was substantially complete, and to this day the party cry of "No POPERY !" will rouse the blood of English artisans and peasants, and call forth ringing cheers from almost any great assembly of free-born Britons. But the value of hatred as a saving grace, even though it be the hatred of the Pope himself, cannot be very considerable : Protestantism, pure and simple, is simply no religion at all : nevertheless, protesting and hating is so much easier than praying and loving that, in the eighteenth century, anti-papery had come to be considered a form of religious faith, and Protestantism was made to cover a multitude of sins.

The spiritual value of this last reformation, or revolution of the State religion, may be estimated in the light of the fact that when the transition took place from the extreme Popery of the reign of Mary to the extreme Protestantism of Elizabeth, nearly all the clergy of the State Church succeeded in overleaping the gulf without the loss of their places. Out of the nine thousand four hundred beneficed clergy of the Church of England, only one hundred and seventy-two quitted



their offices or "livings" rather than change their religion.\* No wonder that such a convenient "religion" rapidly sunk into contempt among a people whose love of what is genuine, as opposed to all pretension, is a well-known national characteristic. The "Anglican Church," says one of its most eminent bishops, "was an ecclesiastical system under which the people of England had lapsed into heathenism,



MARTYRS' MEMORIAL.

or a state hardly to be distinguished from it." But what else was to be expected from a Church whose constitution was a political contrivance invented to meet the exigencies of the State, whose offices were often given as bribes and presents from kings and nobles in recognition of partisan zeal or family claims, and whose sacraments even were regarded by the clergy as exclusive official prerogatives more than as

\* SMITH'S "History of Wesleyan Methodism," vol. i, p. 8.



ordinances of the Lord! To seek for any substantial Christianity as the product of such a Church is only an attempt to gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles.

Throughout this wretched era the Lord had here and there some faithful servants to declare his pleasure and defend his word. These God-fearing men, although in a hopeless minority, lifted up their voices against the iniquities of the time, and from the outpourings of their shame and sorrow the most vivid pictures of the irreligion of the age may be drawn. It was an age that builded the tombs of the martyrs, but which avoided the remotest approach to their heroic life and death.

The Bishop of Lichfield says:—

"The Lord's day is now the devil's market day: more lewdness, more drunkenness, more murders, more sin is contrived and committed on this day than on all the other days of the week together. . . . Sin, in general, has grown so hardened and rampant as that immoralities are defended; yea, justified on principle. Every kind of sin has found a writer to vindicate and teach it, and a bookseller and hawker to divulge and spread it."

Bishop Burnet, in 1713, speaking of the candidates for ordination in the State Church, says: "The much greater part of those who come to be ordained are ignorant to a degree not to be apprehended by those who are not obliged to know it. The easiest part of knowledge is that to which they are the greatest strangers: I mean the plainest parts of the Scriptures."

Bishop Butler, in the preface to his "Analogy," which is itself a piece of devout rationalism, declares that "it has come to be taken for granted that Christianity is not so much a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious."

Sir John Barnard, once Lord Mayor of London, and for forty years its representative in Parliament, complains that "it really seems to be the fashion for a man to declare himself of no religion;" and Montesquieu, in his "Notes on England," says, that "not more than four or five members of the House of Commons were regular attendants at church."

Locky, in his work entitled "England in the Eighteenth Century," describes the theology preached in the churches of the Establishment



as little more than another form of rationalism. "It was," says he, "the leading object of the skeptics of the time to assert the sufficiency of natural religion. It was the leading object of a large proportion of



ENTRANCE TO THE HALL OF CHRIST CHURCH COLLEGE, OXFORD.

the divines to prove that Christianity was little more than natural religion accredited by historic proofs and enforced by the indisputable sanctions of rewards and punishments. Beyond a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity and a general acknowledgment of the veracity of



the gospel narratives, they taught little that might not have been taught by the disciples of Socrates and Confucius."

The Rev. Augustus M. Toplady, himself a minister of the Established Church, who died in 1778, said, in a sermon preached not long before his death: "I believe no denomination of professing Christians, the Church of Rome excepted, was so generally void of the light and life of godliness, so generally destitute of the doctrine and of the grace of the Gospel, as was the Church of England, considered as a body, about fifty years ago. At that period a *converted* minister in the Establishment was as great a wonder as a comet."

Such was the Established Church, the political as distinguished from the spiritual Church, under whose auspices in the eighteenth century the kingdom of Great Britain almost went back to barbarism. "If I had not been Prime Minister," said Premier Walpole, "I would have been Archbishop of Canterbury," and though he neither feared God nor regarded man, this place in the Church of England would, no doubt, have been within his reach if his personal ambition had taken that particular turn.

**Irreligious Learning.**—The universities, too, with all their splendor of architecture and all their wealth of endowment, had fallen into a state of intellectual and moral stagnation.

In 1729 the heads of Oxford issued a notice complaining of the spread of open deism among the students, and urging that they be more carefully instructed in theology. But how was this to be done? The writings of the Christian Fathers were too full of superstition for the classical taste of the times; they were, therefore, displaced by the literature of ancient Greece and Rome; and as for the Bible in Greek and Hebrew, few university men thought the book worthy their attention in any tongue whatever.

The Bishop of Chichester, in a letter to a young clergyman, says:—

"Name me any one of the men famed for learning in this or the last age who have seriously turned themselves to the study of the Scriptures. . . . A happy emendation on a passage in a pagan writer, that a modest man would blush at, will do you more credit and be of more service to you than the most useful employment of your time upon the Scriptures, unless you resolve to conceal your sentiment and speak always with the vulgar."



The popular literature of the day, as to its morality, was quite down to the classical standard. Iniquities of speech, hidden from the unlearned, were dragged forth and exhibited in broad English; books



DINING HALL OF CHRIST CHURCH COLLEGE.

and pictures held place on drawing-room tables which would now consign their publishers to prison; and even the mysteries of religion



were turned into ribald jests. One of the most popular clergymen of the State Church so far prostituted his literary genius as to write a poetic burlesque on the last judgment, and none of the Church dignitaries called the clerical clown to account for his impiety, because the fashionable world was laughing at his wit.

**The Dissenters**—that is to say, the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists—though less conformed to this world, and holding less of it in their hands, were constrained to mourn over the wastes of Zion. Many of their ministers were immoral and negligent of their duty, spending their time and strength in sports and revels, or in scrambling for the best paying pastorates in their respective churches, with much of the same spirit as that which they so bitterly denounced in the clergy of the Established Church.

Surely such an England as this needed a revival of religion; not a "reformation," which would merely replace one State Church by another, but a coming to the front of the divine elements which priest-craft and politics had so long thrust out of sight.

**State of Religion in Scotland.**—A glance at Scotland,



JOHN KNOX.

where the Reformation, under the lead of grand old John Knox had done so great a work, shows that portion of the kingdom to have been burdened with over-much theology. Lecky gives this characteristic picture of a Scotch congregation which was quite driven out of the meeting-house by a sermon preached by the son of their old minister, who had just come home with

certain latitudinarian notions in his head, whereof one of the good elders complained to the father thus:—



"That silly lad has fashed a' the congregation wi' his idle cackle; he's been babbling the oor aboot 'the gude and benevolent God;' and the souls o' the heathen themsel' will gang to heaven if they follow the licht o' their ain consciences; but not ane word does the daft young lad ken nor speer nor say aboot the gude, comfortable doctrines of election, reprobation, original sin, and faith. Hoot, mon; awa wi' sic a fellow!"

If this be a fair showing of Scotch taste in religion, it would appear that the spiritual condition of Scotland at this time was such as to indicate the need of another Reformation.

**Ireland**, where, a few years later, Methodism won some of its brightest triumphs, was, in the first half of the eighteenth century, thought to be hardly worth the notice of polite and respectable Englishmen. Among her people there were, indeed, many superior minds, but for the most part ignorance and superstition reigned supreme.

**Methodism a Benediction.**—The Methodist revival, which must have been a gift from God out of heaven since there was nothing in the condition of this world out of which to produce it, was like a fresh breeze from the north on a sultry summer's day. Reeking odors from all manner of social and spiritual decay filled the air, and the few godly men in England were panting for a pure breath from the upper heavens. At length it came, sweeping along like the winds which God lets loose from his fists, swaying devout souls, breaking down stubborn sinners, spreading confusion where vice and wealth had wrought together to build themselves a tower or temple, overturning hopes built on false foundations, but quenching not the smoking flax nor breaking the bruised reed. It was Heaven's bountiful answer to the silent prayer of the world's great sorrow by reason of its great sin. In the midst of this spiritual darkness God raised up a bishop, a preacher, and a poet; three men the equals of whom have, probably, never been seen in the world at once since the apostolic days: the bishop was John Wesley, the preacher was George Whitefield, the poet was Charles Wesley. To these three men, and those whom they gathered to their standard, did the Lord commit the precious work of awakening the British kingdom to a sense of God and duty, and by them he wrought a reformation which stands alone in British history.



as a spiritual revival of religion without admixture of State-craft or the patronage of Parliament or King.

It has been lately claimed by one high in the English Church that these men were the product of England's ecclesiastical system, and that, therefore, the common judgment of history against the State Church of their day has been unjust.\* As well might it be said that the carcass of Samson's dead lion produced the honey he afterward found in it. Nay, rather let it be said that God in his mercy set himself to save the English Church from its death and corruption; and that the Wesleys and Whitefield were the prophets whom he sent to prophesy to the bones of that valley, and to raise up from among the dead an exceeding great army to the praise of his infinite grace.

\* Dean Stanley, at his Methodist Reception in St. Paul's M. E. Church, New York, 1879.



JOHN KNOX'S CHURCH IN EDINBURGH.





*S Wesley*

Susanna Wesley, Mother of John Wesley.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE WESLEY FAMILY.

A CAREFUL student of human nature has said, "When God sets out to make a great man he first makes a great woman;" a statement eminently true in the case of John Wesley; but only one side of the truth, for on his father's, as well as on his mother's side, he inherited great talents and high moral endowments.

The Wesley, or Westley, family was one of high respectability in the



south of England. Its annals can be traced as far back as the fourteenth century, and it is interesting to find in almost every generation an eminent clergyman and scholar. Thus in 1403 George Westley was prebendary of Bedminster and Radecluye; in 1481 John Westley, "bachelor in degrees," was rector of Langton Matravers; in 1497 John Wannesleigh was rector of Bettiscomb; in 1508 John Wennesley was chaplain of Pillesdon, all of which parishes were in the county of Dorsetshire, in which, after the lapse of one hundred and thirty years, the name of the family, which had undergone such changes in orthography, again appears, beginning with Bartholomew Wesley, the great grandfather of John and Charles Wesley, rector of Charrmouth and Catherston, who gained the title of "the fanatical parson" on account of his opposition to State Church pretensions and his sacrifices for the sake of his opinions. On the accession of Charles II. to the English throne, Bartholomew Wesley, as well as hundreds of other clergymen, was ejected from his "livings," and forbidden, by the "Five Mile Act," to approach within that distance of his former parishes.

**John Westley**, his son, was educated for the priesthood at the University of Oxford. During the civil war the splendid halls and chapels on which Cardinal Wolsey had lavished untold wealth were turned into store-houses, magazines and barracks; but when Cromwell became master of England under the title of "Lord Protector," the Oxford Colleges were repaired, the schools re-opened, and this John Westley, grandfather of John and Charles Wesley, was one of the first as well as one of the foremost scholars admitted thereto. In 1658, the year of Cromwell's death, he became the minister at Whitchurch, a small market town in Shropshire; but with the disappearance of the Commonwealth, and the re-establishment of the throne and the episcopal form of Church Government, he was denounced as one of Cromwell's Puritans, seized by the State Church officers, and carried to prison at Blandford; but so admirable was his conduct at the examination that he was allowed to return to his parish, his gentleness and piety having quite disarmed his envious and spiteful accusers.

The 24th of August, 1662, was the day appointed for carrying into effect the "Act of Uniformity," by which the episcopal form of government was to be fully restored in the Church, and by which all its



ministers were required, not only to use the Book of Common Prayer, but also to avow their "unfeigned assent and consent to all and every thing contained therein."

Mr. Westley, who would not compromise his conscience for the sake of his "living," preached his farewell sermon on the preceding Sunday, August 17th, and thenceforth became an outcast and a wanderer, hunted from town to town, repeatedly thrust into prison, but ever maintaining his faith and his patience, unmoved alike by threats or promises, preaching the Gospel as he could find opportunity, and fur-



JOHN WESTLEY, GRANDFATHER OF JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY.

nishing an admirable illustration of that tenet of his faith entitled "the perseverance of the saints," until his sufferings broke his heart and wore out his life, and he sunk into a premature grave about 1670.

Such was the grandfather and namesake of John Wesley, the Methodist: gentle, incorruptible, devout, with a conscience quick as the apple of an eye, and with a most unconquerable will. He could not be permitted to hold his place in the Church *of* England—but that he was a true and faithful member of the Church *in* England there is no occasion to deny.



**Samuel Westley**, in the next generation, was also a clergyman. He was left an orphan in his infancy, which fact may account for the slight impression made upon him by the heroic sacrifices and sufferings endured by his father and grandfather in defense of the rights of conscience.

In the academy at Newington Green, a private school of the Dissenters, in which he was placed to be trained for a Non-conformist minister, he had for his school-fellows the famous Daniel De Foe, and a lad named Crusoe, after whom the immortal hero of the lonely island was named. Here young Westley soon distinguished himself as a writer, and when only seventeen years of age he was selected to reply to certain severe articles which had been published against the Dissenters; but the course of reading by which he sought to prepare himself for his task had the opposite effect upon his mind from what he had intended, for it led him to espouse the cause of the Establishment, and he became thenceforth a sturdy defender of the State Church, and an ardent Tory in politics, which sentiments in after years cost him no little trouble. Knowing the opposition he was sure to encounter from his mother, as well as from an old aunt, who appears to have offered an asylum to the widow and her family, and to have been his patron at school, young Westley left her house one morning very early, with only the sum of two pounds and sixteen shillings in his pocket, and started for Oxford, where he entered himself at Exeter College, where in due time he took his bachelor's degree.

In 1690 he was ordained as deacon in the Established Church, and presented to the small "living" of South Ormsby by the Marquis of Normanby. This nobleman, who owned the parish, thought to own its minister also, but the Reverend Samuel was not the man to be kept in subjection, and, having turned the marquis' mistress out of doors, who had insisted on being a visitor at the rectory, he himself was thrust out of his "living," but soon afterward obtained the rectorship of the parish of Epworth, in Lincolnshire, a position in the gift of the Crown, where he passed the remainder of his life, and where his two famous sons, John and Charles, were born; the former on the 17th of June, 1703, and the latter on the 18th of December, 1708.\*

\* Rev. Samuel Wesley left the "t" out of the family name about the time of his removal to Epworth.



It would seem that the Ruler of events was planning these two men several generations beforehand, and was carefully developing just those elements of mind and body which were to be required in the great mission on which he had determined to send them. In the grandfather of the Methodist Wesley he seems to have arrived at the proper pattern for the great leader, John Wesley, and in their father, the ideal for the poet of this great revival, Charles Wesley; for John is almost John Wesley over again, while Charles is the *fac simile* of his father Samuel, though in both cases there is a very considerable ascent as well as descent.



SUSANNA ANNESLEY.

**The Mother of the Wesleys.**—All writers of Methodist history dwell with rapture on the talents and virtues of that admirable English matron, Mrs. Susanna Wesley; while to the devout student thereof the gracious purpose of God is manifest in preparing and unit-



ing two such noble lines of power and genius as those which were joined in the persons of Samuel Westley and Susanna Annesley.

This lady was the youngest daughter of Rev. Samuel Annesley, LL.D., a nephew of the Earl Anglesea and a graduate of Oxford, where his studiousness and his piety were as admirable as they were rare. He was afterward settled in the parish of St. James, in London, and was also appointed lecturer at St. Paul's; but, being a Non-conformist, as those ministers of the Establishment were called who refused to submit to the "Act of Uniformity," he was ejected from his preferments, and, being a gentleman of fortune, he became a leader and benefactor among his Non-conformist brethren, who, like him, had been driven from their parishes, but who, unlike him, were poor.

Singularly enough, his daughter, while scarcely more than a child, passed through the same change of sentiment as that already mentioned in the case of her future husband. She, too, had studied the controversy between the Established Church and the Dissenters, and had thereby become an ardent friend of the Establishment. Thus it would appear to have been a part of the divine purpose that the great religious leader, John Wesley, should not only inherit that vigor of personal opinion which was the outcome of English Nonconformity, but that he should be born and reared within the bosom of the Established Church: a fact not to be forgotten in tracing his career as a Methodist and a Churchman.

In the year 1689 the Rev. Samuel Wesley and Susanna Annesley were married, the age of the bride being about twenty, and that of the bridegroom about twenty-seven. For about forty years this historic household dwelt in the parish of Epworth, the father dividing his time between the care of his parish and voluminous literary labors, chiefly in the form of poetry; while the mother kept at home, guided the house, bore children—eighteen or nineteen of them in all, though only ten survived their infancy—trained them in a school of her own, and also attended to such parish duties as the frequent absence of her husband left upon her hands. Of this great family three sons and seven daughters grew up to maturity. They all possessed unusual talents, and all three of the sons became ministers of the Established Church.

It seems almost incredible that the wife of a parish clergyman,



upon a salary which was too small even to allow his family proper food and clothing, a lady of delicate health and of refined tastes, which were continually shocked by the rude people among whom she lived, should have been able to endure such toils and privations without losing either her spirit or her life; but in spite of all these depressing circumstances and surroundings she actually kept herself so far in advance of her college-bred sons, especially in things pertaining to the word and kingdom of God, that for years she was their acknowledged spiritual counselor and guide. Among other helpful things she wrote for them some most admirable expositions of Scripture, and of portions of the Book of Common Prayer. She grounded her children in the rudiments of learning; trained them up to be ladies and gentlemen, and, in spite of the continual misfortune which came upon the family because her husband was more of a poet and a politician than was good for him, she ever remained the same courteous, self-poised, far-seeing, courageous Christian woman.

**Mrs. Wesley's Home School.**—The family of the rector was the only one in the parish that could boast of any learning; therefore if the children were not to grow up barbarians they must, of necessity, for a long time be schooled at home. This great task fell almost wholly to the mother, and her success therein adds no little emphasis to the principles on which she conducted it. Her theory was that even in babyhood the child should be taught that one lesson which it was capable of learning, namely, submission; the next lesson was obedience, that is to say, intelligent submission to parental authority; the next lesson was piety, that is, intelligent and loving submission to God. At five years old it was her rule to begin their secular education, and from this time they studied regularly in the family school, of which Mrs. Wesley was both the teacher and mother.

Dr. Adam Clarke, whose Irish gallantry no doubt gave its heightened color to the boundless admiration in which he held the mother of the Wesleys, tells us that this great family of little children were wonderfully gentle and polite, not only to their parents and visitors, but to each other and to the servants as well; and that "they had the common fame of being the most loving family in the county of Lincolnshire."

**Mrs. Wesley's "Conventicle."**—A glimpse of the illiterate and ungovernable rustics among whom they lived and labored is given



in two of Mrs. Wesley's letters to her husband, while he was absent for some months in attendance upon the meeting of Convocation at London; but, what is of more importance, they contain an account of that notable effort on the part of Mrs. Wesley to promote true religion in her own family and among her neighbors by an irregular but wonderfully efficient means of grace, to wit, a private meeting at the rectory on Sunday evenings, conducted by Mrs. Wesley herself.

The curate who assisted the rector with the duties of his two small parishes, Epworth and Wroote, was, in the judgment of Mrs. Wesley, unable to edify her husband's people, and, seeing the attendance at church fall off, she commenced to hold private meetings for her own family, and such others as chose to attend. These little services were similar to those conducted at the parish church, consisting of portions of the service from the Prayer Book, and a sermon read by Mrs. Wesley.

Not wishing to trespass upon her husband's rights by holding religious service in his parish without his consent, she wrote to him describing their little meetings, and mentioned that they were evidently doing the people much good.

Mr. Wesley objected to this singular proceeding, and suggested that, to avoid the scandal of having a sermon read in public by a woman, she should find some man to read it.

Mrs. Wesley replied: "As for your proposal of letting some other person read. Alas! you do not consider what a people these are. I do not think one man among them could read a sermon without spelling a good part of it out. And how would that edify the rest?"

In relation to her husband's objection on the ground of her sex, she replies: "As I am a *woman*, so I am also *mistress* of a large family. And though the superior charge of the souls contained in it lies upon *you*, as head of the family and as their *minister*, yet in your absence I cannot but look upon every soul you leave under my care as a talent committed to me under trust by the great Lord of all the families of heaven and earth."

When the attendance at the little meetings at the parsonage had increased to between two and three hundred, the stupid curate, jealous of the woman for having a larger congregation in her house than he could draw at the parish church, wrote to his rector, complaining of



this disorderly assembly—this conventicle,\* as irregular religious services were spitefully called—and Mr. Wesley, whose High-church notions always lay near the surface, at once wrote to his wife desiring her to suspend her meetings.

In reply Mrs. Wesley gives the following account of how she came to hold the meetings:—

“Soon after you went to London, Emily [one of her daughters] found in your study an account of the Danish missionaries, which, having never seen, I ordered her to read to me. I was never, I think, more affected with any thing than with the relation of their travels, and was exceedingly pleased with the noble design they were engaged in. Their labors refreshed my soul beyond measure, and I could not forbear spending good part of that evening in praising and adoring the divine goodness for inspiring those men with such ardent zeal for His glory, that they were willing to hazard their lives and all that is esteemed dear to men in this world to advance the honor of their Master, Jesus.

“For several days I could think or speak of little else. At last it came into my mind: Though I am not a *man* nor a *minister* of the Gospel, and so cannot be employed in such a worthy employment as they were, yet if my heart were sincerely devoted to God, and if I were inspired with a true zeal for his glory and did really desire the salvation of souls, I might do somewhat more than I do. I thought I might live in a more exemplary manner in some things. I might pray more for the people and speak with more warmth to those with whom I have an opportunity of conversing.

“However, I resolved to begin with my own children; and accordingly I proposed and observed the following method: I take such a proportion of time as I can best spare every night to discourse with each child, by itself, on something that relates to its principal concerns. On Monday I talk with Molly; on Tuesday with Hetty; Wednesday with Nancy; Thursday with ‘Jackey;’ [“Jackey” Wesley! who, since that day, ever conceived of John Wesley as a boy?] Friday

\* The famous “Conventicle Act” was passed by the British Parliament in 1664. It forbade the assembly of more than five persons besides the resident members of a family for any religious purpose not according to the Book of Common Prayer. Mrs. Wesley’s conventicle was, however, strictly according to that book, for she used no other service than that laid down in it.



with Patty; Saturday with Charles; and with Emily and Sukey together on Sunday.

“With those few neighbors who then came to me I then discoursed more fully and affectionately than before. I chose the best and most awakening sermons we had, and I spent time with them in such exercises. Since this our company has increased every night; for I dare deny none that asks admittance. Last Sunday I believe we had above two hundred, and yet many went away for want of room.

“But I never durst positively presume to hope that God would make use of *me* as an instrument in doing good; the furthest I durst go was—It may be: who can tell?”

After mentioning the good which had been done—among other things, that the meeting had wonderfully conciliated the minds of the people toward their pastor and his family, so that they could now live in peace among them—Mrs. Wesley closes with these wifely and Christian sentences:—

“If you do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you *desire me* to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience. But send me your *positive command* in such *full and express terms* as may absolve me from all guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good, when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Such dutiful words from his wife and parishioner, which at the same time brought the rector face to face with God, and challenged him to exercise his right and power with the same obedient heart toward his superior as that she held toward hers, seems to have given a new turn to the argument, and to have left the victory with the woman; for we hear nothing more of the rector's objections, and “The Society,” as Mrs. Wesley named her assembly, continued its meetings until the rector's return.

**Epworth Politics.**—The sharpness and power of this lady's mind is suggested by her reference to the fact that her “conventicles” had been the means of establishing peaceful relations between the family of the rector and the people of the parish. This was touching her husband in a vital spot; for his political partisanship had kept the parish in a ferment of sullen ugliness which sometimes broke out into open violence against the rector and his family.



The bitterness of the quarrels between the two factions into which the parish and the kingdom were divided can hardly be appreciated at the present day. The reigning King was William III., Prince of Orange, who, with his wife, Mary, the eldest daughter of King James II., had come over from the Dutch Netherlands at the invitation of the leaders of the Protestant party in England, and possessed himself of the throne which James, on account of his tyranny in the interests of the Papists, had been compelled to abdicate.



THE YOUNG PRETENDER.

James II. was now dead, and the Papist party in England, called Jacobites, claimed to hold allegiance to his son, known in history as the "Young Pretender," in whose interest the Jacobites were continually plotting and planning for another revolution, with a view to set up the Romish Church again as the Church of England. The Epworth rector was a firm supporter of William and Mary, but his wife, although as good a Protestant as himself, did not believe in the



legitimacy of their title, though she prudently kept her opinion to herself.

One day at family worship the rector noticed that his wife did not say "Amen" in the proper place after the form of prayer for the king and royal family, and when the service was over he straightway inquired the reason.

"I do not believe in the title of the Prince of Orange," said Mrs. Wesley. This raised the patriotic wrath of her husband, who instantly replied:—

"If we have two kings we must have two beds." And he actually left his family and his parish and remained away from them for more than half a year, till Queen Anne, another daughter of the exiled James II., came to the throne, in whose title both the husband and the wife believed; whereupon the family was once more united.

If the learned and pious rector of the parish could make such an exhibition of bad temper over a difference of political opinion in his own household, what might not be expected of the rabble in the wild excitements of festivals and elections?

**A Brand Plucked from the Burning.**—The parish of Epworth was divided against itself, and so wild was the zeal of the Jacobites on the one hand and the Orangemen on the other that it often broke out into deeds of violence.

The election for the county of Lincoln in May, 1705, was very bitter and exciting. Mr. Samuel Wesley, with more valor than discretion, entered warmly into the contest in support of the candidate of the Orangemen, who was, nevertheless, defeated; and, on his return from the polling-place at the county-seat, the Epworth Jacobites celebrated their victory by raising a mob, which surrounded the rectory and kept up a din of drums, shouts, noise of fire-arms, and such like, till after midnight.

The next evening one of the mob, passing the yard where the rector's children were playing, cried out, "O ye devils! we will come and turn ye all out of doors a-begging, shortly;" a threat which must have had a strange significance to the Wesleys, whose fathers had suffered that identical outrage at the hands of the Church to which the rector was now devoting his tongue and his pen. It would have been "an eye for an eye" if the Jacobites had been able to execute



their threat by means of another revolution; but as they were not they kept up an infamous style of persecution, stabbing the rector's cows, cutting off a leg of his dog, withholding his tithes, arresting and thrusting him into jail for small debts, and finally, after one or two unsuccessful attempts, burning the rectory to the ground, and fulfilling their threat of turning him and his family out of doors.



A BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING.

This last event occurred when his son John was about six years old. In the dead of a winter's night the father was awakened by the fire coming into his chamber through the thatched roof, and, hastily arousing his family, they fled down stairs, and with great difficulty escaped with their lives. By some mischance little John was left behind, fast asleep; but being awakened, he sprang to the window and



began to cry for help. It was too late; the house was filled with smoke and flame; there was not time to fetch a ladder, and the frantic father tried in vain to ascend the stairs, but they were already too far gone to support his weight; and, half dead with suffocation and frantic with distress, he fell on his knees and commended his poor lost boy to God. But meanwhile a stout man had placed himself against the wall of the house, and another had climbed upon his shoulders, and little Jack, leaping into his arms, was rescued out of the very jaws of the flame. The next instant the whole blazing mass of the roof fell in.

This fire occurred in the year 1709. The letters of Mrs. Wesley to her husband, above quoted, bear the dates of February 6th and 12th, 1712, whereby it would appear that the wrath of their enemies had followed them year after year until, in the absence of the rector, his wife, under the blessing of God, so established her influence with the people as to bring them in crowds to the rectory for prayer and instruction, thus becoming the real preacher of the Gospel of peace; after which time there is no further record of ill-will on the part of the Epworth people toward their pastor or his family.

John Wesley, in after years, was always deeply affected by this narrow escape from so terrible a death, and on the margin of a picture which was painted to commemorate the event he wrote the significant words:—

*“Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?”*

The notable success of Mrs. Wesley’s “Society,” as appears from her letter to her husband, above quoted, in harmonizing her husband’s parish, after years of such confusion and violence, was an argument in favor of her course which could not be overthrown. It was evident that the Head of the Church was her patron and defender; and, what is especially noticable, she understood how to use the fact of her wonderful success without descending to spiteful personalities in her discussions with her husband, or even abating one jot of the wifely duty and respect which she owed to him. John Wesley was afterward distinguished for his almost inimitable skill as a logician, who could win a victory in a debate with fewer words and in better temper than any other man of his time. Is it not plain that this amiable sharpness and this logical power were among his birth inheritances from his admirable mother?



**Samuel Wesley as an Author.**—The father of the Wesleys was a poet, and, according to his theory, poetry and poverty naturally went hand in hand. His first curacy in London yielded him only thirty pounds a year, about one hundred and fifty dollars; but to this he added thirty pounds more by his literary work, and on this slender income he married Susanna Annesley—one of the most sensible things recorded of him—and lived in lodgings until he received the “living” of South Ormsby, worth about fifty pounds a year.

In 1693 he published the first of his large poetic works, entitled, “The Life of Our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; A Heroic



THE NEW RECTORY AT EPWORTH.

Poem in Ten Books; Dedicated to Her Most Sacred Majesty [Queen Mary]; Attempted by Samuel Wesley, Rector of South Ormsby, in the County of Lincoln.” This poem, however valueless in itself, earned for him the favor of his queen, who the next year returned his compliment by conferring on him the “living” of Epworth, and afterwards that of Wroote, a poor little village a few miles distant, both together worth about two hundred and fifty pounds a year. These livings he held till his death; which event occurred on the 25th of April, 1735, in the seventy-second year of his age and in the thirty-ninth year of his service as rector of the parish of Epworth.



His other works are more remarkable for length than depth, and of the vast mass of rhyming rubbish which he threw off only a few stanzas have found place even in the Hymn books published by his own sons.

He possessed to a notable degree the power of persistent mental application, and what may be called the mechanical skill of versification, but without that divine enlightenment and that creative power in which consists the measureless difference between a sacred poet and a beater of rhymes.

The Rev. Samuel Wesley is entitled to no small honor for being one of the first men in England to perceive the opportunity and duty of carrying the Gospel into foreign parts. He even wrote out a plan for a great system of British missionary colonies or settlements in India, China, Abyssinia, and in the islands of St. Helena, St. Thomas, etc., which plan was approved by the Bishop of York; but for want of missionary spirit among the English clergy this scheme, which Adam Clarke declares was such as might easily have been carried into execution, was suffered to fall to the ground—but not to perish, for his sons, John and Charles, inherited his missionary zeal, and their labors, with God's blessing, have resulted in a scheme of evangelization which has belted the earth with Methodist circuits and stations, and which will never be suspended till all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

With the other members of the Wesley family this volume has little concern. Samuel, the eldest son, became a learned and respectable minister in the Established Church, in which capacity he thought himself called upon to protest against the extravagancies of his younger brothers; of the daughters, the most of whom grew up to be brilliant and talented women, those who care to know more can find what little there is on record in Dr. Adam Clarke's "Wesley Family."

**The Charter House School.**—At the age of eleven "Jackey" Wesley, after five years' tuition in the home school taught by his mother, which was by far the best institution of learning he ever attended, was placed at the Charter House School in London.\*

\*The name of this school is derived as follows: In the days when the monasteries of England were numerous, rich, and powerful, the order of Carthusian monks established a monastery on this site which they called a Chartreuse, the name given to their religious houses in the various parts of Europe; but in the time of Henry VIII. this monas-



In this school the law of the strongest prevailed. All sorts of petty tyrannies were practiced by the big boys upon the little ones, and "Jackey" Wesley was no exception to their rule. The regular rations issued to the boys included meat as well as bread, but the big boys, like so many big dogs, would pounce upon the little chaps as they came from the cook's house with their rations in their hands, and rob them of their meat, thus forcing them to become vegetarians in spite of themselves, until they became strong enough to fight for their meat, and later on for that of their juniors also.



THE CHARTER HOUSE SCHOOL.

Such outrages have been defended on the ground that the hardship which this injustice inflicts is useful in teaching the small boy to be patient under difficulties, and to make the best of misfortunes; but there is little said concerning the savagery which is produced among the larger ones by this abuse of those whom circumstances have placed

tery shared the fate of many others, and the ruins of it were at length purchased by Thomas Sutton, who repaired the edifice and built a hospital, and established a school therein, on whose double foundation or endowment eighty pensioners of not less than fifty years of age, and forty-two boys as charity scholars, were to be maintained. The allowance from the endowment to each scholar was forty pounds a year, and it was no small piece of good fortune to the Epworth rector to secure one of these scholarships for his son John.



in their power. If the theory of these great schools were to train the youth of England to submit uncomplainingly to the impositions of unjust laws or the tyranny of usurped authority, nothing could be better adapted to that end than the system above mentioned. But "Jackey" managed to thrive in spite of his tormentors: taking a run every morning three times around the ample play-grounds, according to his father's direction, and eating his ration of bread with a good appetite, sharpened by the sight of some tall young gentleman (?) devouring two cold cuts of boiled beef or roast mutton, the one being his



DINING HALL OF CHARTER HOUSE.

by right, the other "by conquest"—a phrase which the British nation has done so much to translate from robbery into heroism.

Two years later his younger brother, Charles, was sent to school at Westminster, where his brother Samuel was one of the ushers, as certain of the younger assistant teachers were called, and who paid the cost of his younger brother's course of study. Little Charles was a spirited lad, well knit, active, and afraid of nothing, which qualities not only made him a favorite—for boys are always hero-worshippers—but gained him the title of "captain of the school." His leadership,



however, was of a different sort from that which would have led him to rob his inferiors, cringe to his superiors, and fight his equals; he had a heroic spirit, and was as generous as he was brave.

Dr. Smith, in his admirable "History of Wesleyan Methodism," mentions a case in point:—"There was a Scotch laddie at school, whose ancestors had taken sides with the Pretender, as the papist claimant to the throne was called, and who, in consequence, was greatly persecuted by the other boys; but the "captain" took him under his own special charge; defended him, fought for him, and saved him from what would otherwise have been a life of intolerable misery. This lad was James Murray, afterward the great Baron Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice of England."

While Charles Wesley was a pupil at Westminster a wealthy Irish gentleman, Garret Wesley, Esq., wrote to the Rev. Samuel Wesley inquiring if he had a son named Charles; giving out that he wished to adopt a boy of that name. The result was that for some years the school bills of the lad were paid on the stranger's account by his supposed agent at London; but when the question was submitted to the young man himself whether to go to Ireland, as the adopted son of Garret Wesley, or stay in England and take his chances as the son of a poor clergyman, he made choice of the latter, a decision which his brother John called a "fair escape;" and another boy became the heir of the Irish Wesley's name and fortune. This was Richard Colley Wesley, afterward Lord Mornington, and grandfather of the Duke of Wellington, whose name stands in the army list of 1800 as "The Hon. Arthur Wesley, Lieutenant-Colonel of the Thirty-third Regiment;" more commonly written "Wellesley," which is only a modern corruption of the name, perhaps for the purpose of escaping the suspicion of relationship between the Irish duke and the Methodist reformers.





WEST FRONT OF CHRIST CHURCH COLLEGE, OXFORD.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE HOLY CLUB.

**I**N the year 1720 John Wesley, then a youth of seventeen, was admitted to Christ Church College, Oxford, to which college his brother Charles followed him six years after.

The excellent use he had made of his time at the Charter House gained for him a high position as a student at Oxford, and he soon became quite famous for his learning in the classics, and especially for his skill in logic. But Christ Church was, and still is, the most aristocratic, fashionable, and luxurious of all the Oxford colleges, whose ordi-



mary function is to give a mild scholastic flavor to the manners of the prospective noblemen of the realm, and was, therefore, ill adapted to train a religious leader for his work.

On his arrival he was surprised at the extent to which all manner of dissipations, among which drinking and gambling were only the least disgraceful, prevailed at this central seat of British learning. For a time young Wesley was carried by the current out of his moral latitude; but not for long. Ever since his rescue from the flames his mother had felt impressed to devote herself with special care to the training of this son, toward whom there is in the family records a slight tinge of favoritism, and the suggestion of a presentiment in the mind of that good woman of certain great things which lay before him. In her private journal these words occur with reference to him, written not very long after the fire at the rectory:—"And I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child that Thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may do my endeavor to instill into his mind the principles of thy true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success."

Although John was saved through his mother's teachings and in answer to her prayers from falling into outward sins, the religious nature which he possessed did not very strongly manifest itself until sometime in his twenty-second year. Six years at the Charter House, with its classics and its ruffianism, and five years at Christ Church College, with its aristocratic iniquity, were not calculated to keep alive the memory of the godly training which he received at home. He confesses himself to have lost his childish religion and to have become "a sinner," but not to any desperate degree; for the heavy sinning at Oxford implied heavy expense, and young Wesley was a poor man's son, who could not afford to be fashionably wicked, even if he had possessed that desire. We hear now and then of his debts, a frequent topic in the correspondence of the Wesley family; but, on the whole, his poverty proved his protection, and helped to develop the grace of frugality for which he afterward became conspicuous.

**Wesley Ordained.**—In January, 1725, being then twenty-two years of age, he writes to his father for advice as to whether he should apply for ordination in the Established Church; he, like all the



rest of the male Wesleys, taking to the priesthood with a hereditary instinct; and in the correspondence there is a hint that he had been the subject of some spiritual awakening, and was looking toward a clerical life not only as a means of living, but as a safeguard against habits of sin in which he was fearful of becoming confirmed.

His father replies that there is no harm in trying to obtain holy orders with a view to a respectable livelihood, "but that the principal spring and motive must certainly be the glory of God and the service of the Church in the edification of our neighbor. And woe to him who, with any meaner leading view, attempts so sacred a work."

His mother writes him as follows:—

EPWORTH, *February 23, 1725.*

DEAR JACKY:—The alteration in your temper has occasioned me much speculation. I, who am apt to be sanguine, hope it may proceed from the operation of God's Holy Spirit; that by taking away your relish of sensual enjoyments he may prepare and dispose your mind for a more serious and close application to things of a more sublime and spiritual nature. . . . I heartily wish you would now enter upon a serious examination of yourself, that you may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation. If you have, the satisfaction of knowing it would abundantly reward your pains; if not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears than can be met with in a tragedy.

Now I mention this, it calls to mind your letter to your father about taking orders. I was much pleased with it, and liked the proposal well, but it is an unhappiness almost peculiar to our family that your father and I seldom think alike. I approve the disposition of your mind, and think the sooner you are a deacon the better, because it may be an inducement to greater application in the study of practical divinity, which, I humbly conceive, is the best study for candidates for orders. Mr. Wesley differs from me, and would engage you, I believe, in critical learning, which, though incidentally of use, is in no wise preferable to the other. I earnestly pray God to avert that great evil from you of engaging in trifling studies to the neglect of such as are absolutely necessary. I dare advise nothing. God Almighty direct and bless you. I wish all to be well. Adieu,

SUSANNA WESLEY.

One of the most successful educators in America has said that "one great want of our times is a society for the suppression of useless knowledge." Mrs. Wesley in her day was evidently of the same opinion. With the constant example before her of a man of learning and genius wasting his lifetime in "beating rhymes," delving in Oriental



literature to the neglect of the souls in his parish, turning the Gospel into a "heroic poem," and grinding out pious or classic platitudes in verse on every sort of occasion, appears to have been a powerful motive with her in her efforts to prevent her sons from "engaging in trifling studies." Fortunately for John, he eschewed the counsel of his father and followed the advice of his mother, plunging into the study of "practical divinity," including such books as Thomas à Kempis on "The Imitation of Christ," Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," etc.; and in the following September he was ordained a deacon in the Established Church.

**John Wesley; "Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College."**



REV. JOHN WESLEY, AT THE AGE OF 23.

In 1726 he succeeded in obtaining one of the twelve Fellowships of Lincoln College, one of the smallest, poorest, and most scholarly of the nineteen colleges which are comprised in the University of Oxford, and thither he at once removed, glad to escape from his surroundings at Christ Church, and happy now in having a permanent means of support which would permit him to devote his life to the duties of a Christian minister and scholar.

Some of the Fellowships in the rich colleges at Oxford yielded an annual income of six or seven

hundred pounds; those at Lincoln College, however, were far less valuable, but ample for the supply of his wants.

The position of Fellow was both honorable and easy. Its duties consisted in residing in the college, taking such part as might be agreeable in the general management of its affairs, and helping to maintain the college dignity by a life of learned leisure; it was, in a word, a scholastic sinecure, requiring some distinguished merit to obtain it, continuing until death, marriage, or the presentation of some fat "living," requiring little other college labor, except drawing the



endowment money from the college bursar, and spending it in a manner becoming a gentleman. For a man of Wesley's turn of mind this was, indeed, a paradise. No more debts to haunt him; no more burdens to lay upon his poor father; an assured position among English scholars, and a comfortable home for life in the midst of the best helps to learning then to be found in the world. His ordination gave him additional respectability and influence; it would, also, secure for him a chance of succeeding to some of the small "livings" in the gift of the college, provided he wished to remain a "Fellow," or perhaps open up his way to an ample benefice in case he wished to become rector of a parish and make a start in the race for episcopal honors.

There was great rejoicing at the Epworth rectory over the news that "Jackey" had gained a Fellowship at Oxford. The event served to perpetuate the clerical and scholarly honors of the family, and would add to their income, if

in no other way, by relieving them of the support of this member of the family. Now perhaps mother and daughter might clothe themselves decently as became their station, which they hitherto had been prevented from doing, not so much by the smallness of their income as by its unfortunate manage-



CHAPEL OF LINCOLN COLLEGE.

ment in the hands of the poet parson; and the father might now occasionally call on his clerical son to assist him in the duties of his parish, which, by reason of his literary schemes, had sometimes been sadly neglected.

**Wesley's Scholastic Honors.**—In 1727 the Rev. John Wesley took his degree of Master of Arts, having already been honored by an election to the office of "Lecturer in Greek," and "Moderator



of the Classes." In 1728 he was ordained priest or presbyter by Dr. Potter, the Bishop of Oxford, though there is no evidence of his intention to devote himself to the pastorate.

His position as Greek lecturer attracted to him certain persons, who, like himself, read the Greek Testament for devotion; as well as a number of private pupils who sought his assistance in that department of learning. In Hebrew, too, Wesley was one of the best scholars of his time, he having commenced the study of it when little more than a child. Concerning his office of "Moderator of the Classes," he says: "For several years I was moderator in the disputations which were held six times a week at Lincoln College in Oxford. I could

not avoid acquiring hereby some degree of expertness in arguing, and especially in pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this, when men have hedged me in by what they called



QUADRANGLE OF LINCOLN COLLEGE.

demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces; in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay, and it flew open in a moment." It is evident that Wesley was a distinguished scholar at Oxford, and even that he had achieved all these scholastic honors before he was twenty-five years of age.

In the next two years, 1727-29, John Wesley divided his time between Oxford and Epworth, at which latter place he served as curate to his father, and pursued his studies in "practical divinity" with his mother. There were, indeed, magnificent and famous halls of theology at the University, but Wesley seems to have been of the opinion that in none of them was there a doctor or professor who was equal to his mother. But at length the college authorities desired his return



to Oxford for permanent residence on account of his duties as Moderator of the Classes, and he bade his old home farewell.

**Charles Wesley the first "Methodist."**—His brother Charles had now been a student at Christ Church for more than two years, the first of which he spent in any thing else except study. When reproved by his elder brother for his folly he would reply:—

"What! would you have me to be a saint all at once?" But soon



RADCLIFFE LIBRARY, OXFORD.

after John had gone down to Epworth to assist his father Charles became deeply serious. In a letter to his brother asking such advice as he had so lately scouted, he says:—

"It is owing in a great measure to somebody's prayers (my mother's, most likely) that I am come to think as I do, for I cannot tell how or where I awoke out of my lethargy, only it was not long after you went away."

Charles' piety first showed itself in honest, hard work with his



books, then in attendance upon the sacrament of the Lord's Supper every week; and, being now desirous of doing something more by way of working out his salvation, he persuaded two or three of his young friends to join him in a systematic effort to attain a state of absolute holiness. They adopted a system of rules for holy living, apportioned their time exactly among their various scholarly and religious duties, allowing as little as possible for sleeping and eating, and as much as possible for devotion. It was this regularity of life that earned them the name of "Methodists," a term derived from the Greek word *μεθοδικος*, which signifies "One who follows an exact method;" but John Wesley subsequently turned the tables upon his adversaries in a dictionary which he published for the "People called Methodists," in which he defined the word "Methodist" as "One who lives according to the method laid down in the holy Scriptures."

It thus appears that the Holy Club was organized by Charles Wesley while his elder brother was absent at Epworth; but when John returned to Oxford, Charles and his two friends, Kirkham and Morgan, received him with great delight, and, by reason of his superior age and acquirements, he at once became the head of their little fraternity.

His reputation as a scholar brought him certain young gentlemen who desired his personal instruction, and thus he became a private tutor as well as a college lecturer. Some of these pupils became interested in the plan of holy living which the members of the Club were so enthusiastically pursuing, and were permitted to attend the meeting of the Club as visitors, in the hope that they would at length become members.

John Wesley's views of his duty to his pupils appear in one of his addresses to the tutors of the University, who were, no doubt, amazed and offended that this mere boy in years, and especially in appearance, should venture to offer advice concerning a work upon which he had so recently entered and to which they had devoted their lives:—

"Ye venerable men," he exclaims, "who are more especially called to form the tender minds of youth, to dispel thence the shades of ignorance and error and train them up to be wise unto salvation: Are you filled with the Holy Ghost? Do you continually remind those under your care that the one rational end of all our studies is to know, love, and serve the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he



has sent? Do you inculcate upon them, day by day, that love that alone never faileth, (whereas whether there be tongues, they shall fail, or philosophical knowledge, it shall vanish away,) and that without love all learning is but splendid ignorance, pompous folly, and vexation of spirit? . . . Let it not be said that I speak here as if all under your care were intended to be clergymen. Not so: I only speak as if they were all intended to become Christians." \*



BOCARDO.

**Pious Labors of the Holy Club.**—Besides their frequent meetings for the study of the Greek Testament and devotional exercises, the Wesleys and their two friends began a systematic visitation of the poor and the sick, and presently extended their charity to the poor debtors in Bocardo. This "Bocardo" was a room over the north gate of the ancient city wall, and at that time in use as the debtors'

\* "Wesley's Works," vol. i, page 86.



prison at Oxford. [It was from this place that Archbishop Cranmer was led forth to martyrdom, after having been led up to the top of the tower of St. Michael's Church adjoining the prison, to witness the burning of Ridley and Latimer, in order that the sight of their sufferings might move him to recant. This tower is seen in the center of the cut.]

To this work they devoted two or three hours every week; though before entering upon such a novel enterprise they thought it best to consult Mr. Samuel Wesley about it, who gave his approbation, provided the jailer was satisfied with it, and the bishop of the diocese had no objections.



SOME OF THE PRISONERS.

It was, doubtless, a new experience for the Bishop of Oxford to have a Fellow of Lincoln College and two or three students of Christ's Church asking his permission to do any such undignified thing as to visit the poor, and preach the Gospel to the miserable wretches in the debtors'

prison; but, finding they were really intent upon this holy work, he graciously gave his consent, and thus the Holy Club entered upon its first apostolic ministry.

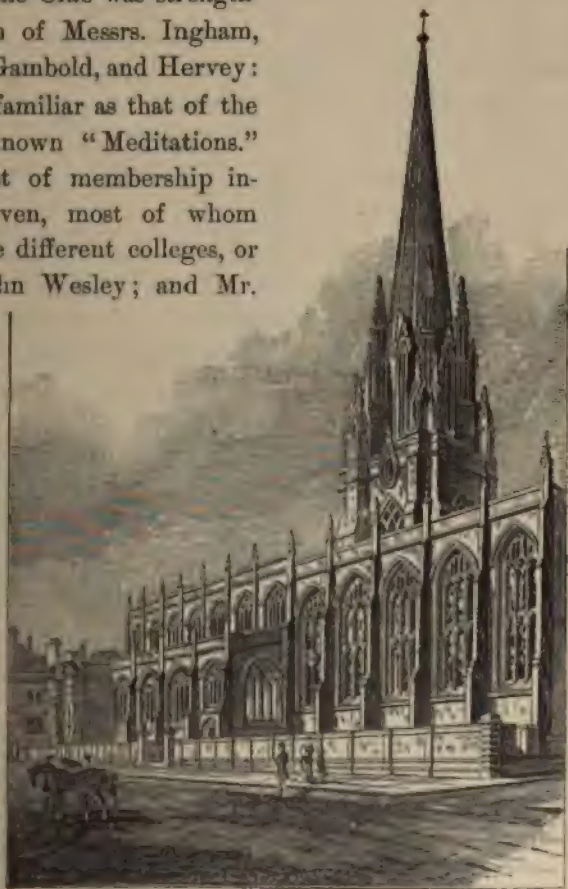
Like the man in the Gospel who was so well satisfied with himself, the members of the Holy Club fasted twice in the week; they denied themselves all luxuries and many comforts that they might have more money to give to the poor; they kept the forty days of Lent so strictly as to be half-starved when the great annual fast was over; they practiced all the rules for the attainment of holiness that they could find in the Book of Common Prayer, "*De Imitationes Christi*," Law's "Sermons," Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," "The Whole Duty of Man," etc., they sought for separation from the world, and managed to live, in the midst of the teeming folly and dissipation of Oxford, a life of almost monastic severity.

There is always something attractive in the life of a devotee, not



always in spite of, but sometimes because of, the privations and sufferings which he endures. Oxford laughed at the members of the Holy Club; but among the young men, and young women, also, who lived in the town and observed the sanctity of the lives of these four men, there were those who were attracted rather than repelled. In 1732 the membership of the Club was strengthened by the addition of Messrs. Ingham, Broughton, Clayton, Gambold, and Hervey: the last name being familiar as that of the author of the well-known "Meditations." At one time the list of membership increased to twenty-seven, most of whom were members of the different colleges, or private pupils of John Wesley; and Mr. Clayton, in a letter to Wesley, gives us a glimpse of one of the lady members, whom he mentions as "poor Miss Potter"—Could it have been the daughter of the bishop?—and of whom he says: "I wonder not that she has fallen;" that is, fallen from the high ritualistic practices and painful devotions of the Holy Club.

And no wonder that some of the members should backslide when the self-mortifications enjoined by their rules were such as to earn the censure of good men as well as the ridicule of bad men; when the newspapers joined in the popular cry against them; when a mob would collect at the door of St. Mary's Church, where the Methodists were in the habit of receiving the



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, OXFORD.



Lord's Supper every week, and shamefully entreat them as they passed in; when certain Church authorities ridiculed and denounced them as "enthusiasts," "fanatics," "papists," "supererogation men," etc., the latter name being flung at them because they insisted on keeping all the fasts prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, sometimes with such vigor as to leave them scarce strength enough to walk.

As the spiritual head of the Club, the youthful Rev. John Wesley published a book of prayers of his own composition for their private use; and that he held to auricular confession is proved by the following quotation from a sharp letter written him by his sister Emily, in reply to one of his own:—

"To lay open the state of my soul to you or any of our clergy is what I have no inclination to at present, and I believe I never shall. I shall not put my conscience under the direction of mortal man frail as myself. To my own Master I stand or fall. Nay, I scruple not to say that all such desire in you or any other ecclesiastic seems to me like Church tyranny and assuming to yourselves a dominion over your fellow-creatures which God never designed you to hold."

He also proposed the formation of a fraternity, a kind of monkish order, to which their habits were directly tending; but Clayton, who was at that time serving a parish in Manchester, and therefore caught an occasional glimpse of the great world which these Oxford devotees temporarily shut out from their reckoning, opposed the idea as a possible "snare for the consciences of weak brethren;" and thus England was spared the infliction of a Protestant Loyola in the person of Wesley, who, if he had been allowed to carry out his designs, was brave enough, learned enough, and heroic enough to have become the general of an order no whit less enterprising and ambitious than that of the Jesuits themselves.

The extent to which the success of the Holy Club depended on the personal magnetism of John Wesley is shown by the fact that while he was absent on a visit to his old home at Epworth, sometime in the year 1733, its membership dwindled from twenty-seven to only five; a reduction scarcely to be lamented, for a more perfect specimen of Pharisaism the Christian world has rarely seen; and its own members in after years confessed it to have been a futile effort to save



themselves, instead of coming to the Saviour set forth in the Word of God.

**George Whitefield.**—It was during the decline and fall of the Holy Club that George Whitefield was added to its number; indeed, he appears to have been its last as well as its most notable accession.

This greatest preacher of modern times, if not of all times, by whose marvelous eloquence and spiritual power the Methodist revival



WHITEFIELD AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-FOUR.

was at first chiefly promoted, and who afterward divided with Wesley for awhile the honors of Methodist leadership, was born in the city of Gloucester, England, December 16, 1714. His father and mother kept the Bell Inn, but his father died when he was only two years old. and his mother, having but a mean opinion of her business, carefully kept her son from all connection with it, until the failing fortunes of the family, caused by his mother's second and unhappy marriage, made it needful for him to leave his school and take the place of pot-boy of the Bell. This was in his fifteenth year.



In a very frank account of himself, which Mr. Whitefield published when he was about twenty-six years old, he says :—

“I can truly say I was froward from my mother’s womb. However the young man in the gospel might boast that he had kept all the commandments from his youth, with shame and confusion of face I confess that I have broken them all from my youth. Whatever foreseen fitness for salvation others may talk of or glory in, I disclaim any such thing. If I trace myself from my cradle to my manhood, I can see nothing in me but a fitness to be damned.”\* Yet he says he had some early convictions of sin ; that he was fond of being a clergyman, and used frequently to “imitate ministers reading prayers;” and that of the money which he used to steal from his mother for cakes and fruits and play-house tickets, he was accustomed to give a portion to the poor!

His talent for dramatic performances was noticed by the master of the school, who composed some small plays for him to act, sometimes even in a female character and dressed accordingly, of which he declares himself to be particularly ashamed, and of which he sets down his opinion thus :—

“And here I cannot observe with too much concern of mind how this way of training up youth has a natural tendency to debauch the mind, to raise ill passions, and to stuff the memory with things as contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as light to darkness, as heaven to hell!”

While he was serving as tapster at the Bell, he was still dreaming of the life of a parson, and even composed two or three sermons, though he had no one to preach them to ; and, indeed, he was far enough from being fit to preach in any other respect except in his talent as a speaker. He was often anxious about his soul, and would sit up far into the night reading his Bible, thinking over his sins, and wishing he could go to Oxford and study for the holy ministry, a wish which, however wild it seemed at the time, was not long after gratified. Of this change from tapster to theologian he writes as follows :—

“After I had continued about a year in this servile employment, my mother was obliged to leave the inn. My brother, who was brought up for the business, married, whereupon all was made over to

\* TYRMAN’S “Life of George Whitefield.”



him, and I being accustomed to the house, it was agreed that I should remain as an assistant. But God's thoughts were not as our thoughts. It happened that my sister-in-law and I could by no means agree. I was much to blame, yet I used to retire and weep before the Lord, little thinking that God by this means was forcing me out from the public business, and calling me from drawing wine for drunkards to draw water out of the wells of salvation for the refreshment of his spiritual Israel."

It appears that during a visit to his brother at Bristol he had been powerfully wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, of which experience he says:—

"Here God was pleased to give me great foretastes of his love, and fill me with such unspeakable raptures, particularly once in St. John's Church, that I was carried out beyond myself. I felt great hungerings and thirstings after the blessed sacrament, and wrote many letters to my mother, telling her I would never go into the public employment again;" but from this state of grace he fell on returning to Gloucester, and being without employment, having forsworn the dram-selling, he fell in with idle companions, by whom he was led into secret vice, and almost into open apostasy from God, though it was impossible for him to be an infidel, toward which abyss he was led by the ideas and influence of some of his Gloucester companions.

One day an old school-fellow paid him a visit, and explained to him how it was possible for a poor lad to pay his way at college as a servitor, and George, who had been deeply impressed that God had some special work laid out for him, saw in this an open door through which, in spite of his poverty, he might pass to learning and the pulpit. With this view he at once resumed his studies at the Gloucester Grammar School, took up his religious duties, and presently became quite a noted leader in religion among the boys of his school.

"For a twelvemonth," he says, "I went on in a round of duties, receiving the sacrament monthly, fasting frequently, attending constantly on public worship, and praying often more than twice a day in private. One of my brothers used to tell me he feared this would not hold long, and that I should forget all when I came to Oxford. This caution did me much service, for it set me upon praying for perseverance; and, under God, the preparation I made in the country was



a preventative against the manifold temptations which beset me at my first coming to that seat of learning."

**Whitefield at Oxford.**—At eighteen years of age Whitefield was admitted to Pembroke College, Oxford, and, being a polite and ready servitor, which trade he had learned at the Bell Inn, he at once became a favorite with the gentlemen of his college, who gave him all the patronage he could attend to, and thus placed him in a position of comparative independence.



PEMBROKE COLLEGE TOWER.

As might be supposed, this young pietist suffered no little persecution for refusing to join in the "excess of riot" of some of his college acquaintances; but nothing could shake him. He had also heard of the Methodists and their Holy Club, and greatly desired to be among them, but his poverty, his modesty, and his youth, pre-

vented him from presuming to seek acquaintance among persons so far above him. It happened, however, that he fell in with Mr. Charles Wesley, who was pleased with him, invited him to breakfast, introduced him to his brother John, who also took a kind interest in the lad, gave him private instructions in things of religion, and, greatly to his delight, introduced him to their little fraternity.

He was a young man of pleasing appearance, courteous manners, heroic courage; a soul capable of ecstasies, revelations, and all the heights and depths of religious emotions; a natural orator, of such dramatic power that in after years the prince of actors envied him; and so wonderfully endowed with faith and fervor, and so completely in harmony with the supernatural world, that he could make his vast audiences feel, if they did not see, the invisible and eternal realities of death and judgment, heaven and hell.

If Whitefield was a devotee before he became a member of the Holy Club, he was afterward a very fanatic. He was so bent upon



conquering the flesh and attaining to the high spirituality of which he read in his books of devotion, that he would lie for whole hours together prostrate on the ground, or on the floor of his study, with his arms extended in the form of a cross, pouring out his soul in silent or



INTERIOR OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

vocal prayer, fighting desperate battles with the devil, whose presence he realized with the most vivid horror; he would sometimes expose himself in the cold until his flesh became almost black; he used the



worst food—coarse bread, and sage tea without sugar—though his place as servitor gave him a chance at the best, for the remainder of the elegant repasts which he served to his wealthy patrons were regarded as the servitor's perquisites; he wore shabby clothes, put no powder on his hair, fasted till he was half starved, lived in alternate ecstasy and misery, attended the weekly communion at St. Mary's Church along with the other Methodists, visited the poor and the sick, and strove, through self-mortification, prayer, alms-giving, and frequent use of the sacraments, to become a saint of the holiest sort.

**Whitefield's Experience of Conversion.**—That work of the Holy Spirit upon the soul of the believer in Christ which is now so well understood among Methodists, was at this time almost unheard of, even in the orthodox communion of the English Church. To be converted signified, in the doctrinal teachings of English pulpits, a gradual process by which, often through very slow degrees, a baptized member of the Church might, somehow or other, come into a salvable condition, at which, however, there was no expectation of his arriving until the hour and article of death. Even to this day a minority only of the English clergy believe, experience and preach instantaneous conversion; and during the progress of the recent revivals in that kingdom under the leadership of the American evangelists certain of the clergy made bitter attacks upon the movement, denouncing it, among other reasons, because it gave so much prominence to the idea of "instantaneous conversion."

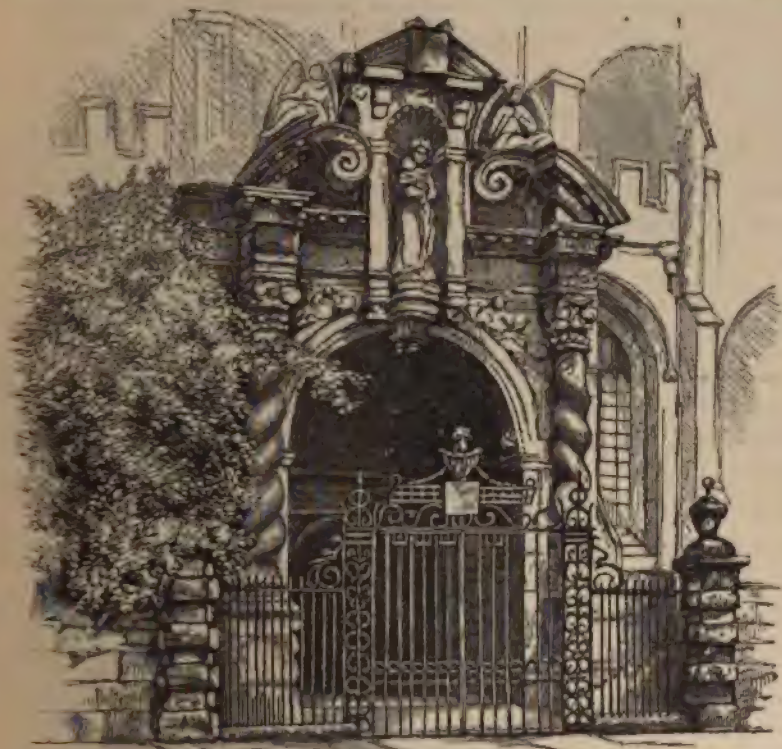
Whitefield, the dreamer, the enthusiast, the would-be martyr, was the first member of the Holy Club to come into this divine experience of regeneration. No member of the Holy Club, not even John Wesley himself, understood this heavenly mystery. Their ideas of holiness were of a condition of soul which could be worked up by prayers, fasts, alms, and sacraments. Of that state of grace which is wrought in the soul by the power of the Spirit of God through faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ, they had no knowledge, partly because they had no one to point out the force of the Scriptures which treat upon this point, and partly because they were so intent on making themselves holy that they overlooked the fact that salvation was by faith instead of by works.

In the awful struggles of soul through which Whitefield passed,



his mind was so tormented that he could not perform his college duties, and for a time such was his behavior that he was actually believed to have become insane:—

“Near five or six weeks,” he writes, “I was fighting with my corruptions, and did little else besides kneeling down by my bedside, feeling, as it were, a pressure upon my body as well as an unspeakable oppression of mind, yet offering up my soul to God to do with me as



GATEWAY OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH, OXFORD.

it pleased him. It was now suggested to me that Jesus Christ was among the wild beasts when he was tempted, and that I ought to follow his example; and being willing, as I thought, to imitate Jesus Christ, after supper I went out into Christ Church Walk, near our college, and continued in silent prayer under one of the trees for near two hours. The night being stormy, it gave me awful thoughts of the day of judgment. The next night I repeated the same exer-



cise at the same place. . . . Soon after this the holy season of Lent came on, which our friends kept very strictly, eating no flesh during the six weeks except on Saturdays and Sundays. I abstained frequently on Saturdays also, and ate nothing on the other days, except Sundays, but sage tea without sugar and coarse bread. I constantly walked out in the cold mornings till part of one of my hands was quite black. This, with my continued abstinence and inward conflicts, at length so emaciated my body that at Passion-week, finding I could scarce creep up stairs, I was obliged to inform my kind tutor of my situation, who immediately sent a physician to me. This caused no small triumph among the collegians, who began to cry out, 'What is his fasting come to now?'

"This fit of sickness continued upon me for seven weeks, and a glorious visitation it was. The blessed Spirit was all this time purifying my soul. All my former gross and notorious, and even my heart sins, also, were now set home upon me, of which I

wrote down some remembrance immediately, and confessed them before God morning and evening. . . .

"About the end of the seven weeks, and after I had been groaning under an unspeakable pressure of body and mind for above a twelvemonth, God was pleased to set me free. . . I found and felt in myself that I was delivered from the burden that had so heavily oppressed me. The spirit of mourning was taken from me, and I knew what it was truly to rejoice in God my Saviour, and for some time could not avoid singing psalms wherever I was: but my joy gradually became more



THE BROAD WALK, OXFORD.



settled, and, blessed be God! has abode and increased in my soul, save a few casual intermissions, ever since. Now did the Spirit of God take possession of my soul, and, as I humbly hope, seal me unto the days of redemption."

It was during this time that John Wesley had helped him out of his despondency and advised him to continue his performance of the external duties of religion. At a time when he was tempted to abandon them and give over the struggle in despair, Charles Wesley lent him a book to read, entitled, the "Life of God in the Soul of Man," from which he learned that "a man may go to church, say his prayers, receive the sacrament, and yet not be a Christian;" and this book, through the blessing of the divine Spirit, was the means of bringing him into the experience of saving grace. "Holding the book in my hand," he says, "I thus addressed the God of heaven and earth:—

"‘Lord, if I am not a Christian, for Jesus Christ’s sake show me what Christianity is, that I may not be damned at last.’ I read a little further, and discovered that they who know any thing of religion know it is a vital union with the Son of God—Christ found in the heart. O, what a ray of divine light did then break in upon my soul!

"I know the place: it may, perhaps, be superstitious, but whenever I go to Oxford I cannot help running to the spot where Jesus Christ first revealed himself to me, and gave me a new birth." This was in the year 1735, when Whitefield was in his twenty-first year.

Cool-headed, cool-hearted rationalists will certainly scoff at such a radical, terrible, glorious conversion as that of George Whitefield. Half-way-covenant believers, whose sluggish souls were never stirred to the depths, perhaps because their souls have no depths to be stirred, will say that this man was the victim of a pious delusion: materialists will call his supernatural experience a case of fanatical enthusiasm; but they who through faith have been made "partakers of the Divine nature" will understand the mystery and pray for the multiplication of such experiences among both ministry and people.

The decided character of Whitefield’s testimony concerning his conversion is worthy of special attention, occurring, as it does, at a time when the doctrine of Assurance of Faith was very rarely heard. Whitefield was saved so gloriously that he had no difficulty in recognizing the fact. Is it true, then, that the reason why so many profess-



ing Christians are in doubt about their experience of saving grace is to be found in the fact that their experience of grace really amounts to so little! Yea or nay, this certainly is true, that all the great souls whom God has set to be leaders in his Church have passed through the same deep convictions, and fought the same desperate battles with the powers of darkness, as those recorded of this Apollos of the eighteenth century. They have not only been baptized with water, but also with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

It was three years after this that the Wesleys came into the experience of the new birth. They approached it with scholarly research, Whitefield with absolute desperation; they were gentlemen, he was only a poor, despised servitor who felt himself unworthy of their notice; they were teachers and in holy orders, he was a poor, broken-hearted devotee, lost in the abyss of his own depravity, and only crying out for God; they were Pharisees, he was a publican—and of course he came into the kingdom long before them.

**The doctrines of the Holy Club** were orthodox. They were the doctrines of the Book of Common Prayer, flavored with mysticism and somewhat tainted with popery. John Wesley, as has been seen, was instructed by his mother in the theology of his dissenting grandfather Dr. Annesley, as well as in that of the Established Church, of which his father was a champion. Besides these, Mrs. Wesley held certain views of her own; as, for instance, she rejected the doctrine of unconditional election of a part of the human race to eternal glory, and reprobation of the remainder to eternal woe; and taught her son to believe that this inference of the Westminster doctors was a slander against the justice of God. The whole Wesley family accepted the Apostles' Creed as the best statement of theoretical religion; so also did the Holy Club, and they strove after inward holiness by the practice of outward morality and by the help of all the means of grace of which they had any knowledge.

What was the fault of all this?

None at all; it was good as far as it went; but it was only one side of the subject—the human side; it was an attempt to train and develop the old nature into a state of holiness, instead of seeking for the new nature which is born of God; it was trying to turn the carnal mind from its enmity toward God, instead of displacing it



with the mind that was in Christ; it was cultivating the corrupt tree so as to make it bring forth good fruit; it was going about to establish their own righteousness, whereby they overlooked the righteousness that is by faith.

In those days, while, as Bunyan has it, Mr. Wesley was in charge of Mr. Legality, he thus speaks of his work:—

“I preached much, but saw no fruit of my labor. Indeed, it could not be that I should, for I neither laid the foundation of repentance nor of believing in the Gospel; taking it for granted that all to whom I preached were believers, and that many of them needed no repentance.” Nevertheless, while those who could not comprehend him called him “a crack-brained enthusiast,” his outward piety was the admiration of the pious, as well as the despair of the profane. As a High-Churchman of the most ultra sort, Wesley believed that one who had been baptized by a regularly ordained clergyman of the Church of England or of the Church of Rome was thereby made a Christian, and the chief difference he saw in such persons was in the degree of their faithfulness to the vows taken by godfathers and godmothers on their behalf. Repentance with him was synonymous with reformation, that is, repentance toward one’s self and his own past life instead of repentance toward God; faith with him signified holding correct religious opinions, and being in fellowship with the Established Church; but of that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ which claims him as a personal and present Saviour the Holy Club had a very faint conception.

The Witness of the Spirit they understood to be no more than a kind of spiritual glow which might be supposed to indicate the divine approbation, instead of the inter-communion between the soul of the regenerated believer and the Holy Spirit of God, whereby he assures them of their having passed from death unto life.

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,” saith the apostle, “that we are the children of God;” and again, “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, whereof the Holy Spirit is witness to us.” But the Holy Club looked for a perfecting themselves by themselves, with the help of God, to be sure, and they sought for a sense of God’s smile upon the success of their efforts to please him. They made a splendid effort to attain salvation by law, and they came as near to it, no doubt, as any class of men since



the world began; they were admirable specimens of theological and ecclesiastical piety; but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than they. The whole land was blatant with heresy and reeking with vice, and they determined to oppose the tide.

With what?

With exhortations; with condemnations of sin; with sacraments and liturgies; and, above all, with the power of pious example.

No wonder they failed. It is hard work for a man to lift himself. Even their miserable parish in Bocardo, on which they spent so much time and money, was little credit to them, for the poor debtors took their alms, listened to their prayers and preaching, and relapsed into brawling and fighting again as soon as they were gone. The preacher was not yet converted himself; how, then, could he be expected to strengthen his brethren? Only Whitefield, out of this whole company of Oxford devotees, had escaped from the bondage of self-righteousness, and found his way into the liberty of the children of God.

Why was he thus favored above the rest?

Evidently because he was the first to reach the point of absolute despair of being able to save himself.

**The Holy Club Broken Up.**—Not long after his conversion Whitefield, prostrated in body by his terrible struggles of soul, left Oxford for a visit to his home in Gloucester; Gambold was ordained and settled as a curate in the little village of Stanton-Harcourt; Broughton went up to London as curate at The Tower; Ingham took a curacy in Essex; the two Wesleys went up to Westminster, where their brother Samuel resided; Hervey went home to Hardingstone, and for a season Oxford was clear of its Methodists.

Had the fire burned out?

Not at all. God was only scattering the brands that he might set the whole kingdom in a blaze.

The subsequent careers of the different members of the Holy Club are various; some of them painful. William Morgan was the first to represent the Club above, he having, shortly after its dissolution, fallen into a melancholy or mania which presently resulted in his death. Charles Kinchin, a lovely character, soon followed him. James Hervey will be loved and honored as one of the brightest examples of Christian living, and the author of "The Meditations," one



of the sweetest devotional compositions in the English language. On the other hand, the High-Churchism of Clayton was a serious blot on his clerical career. Broughton's usefulness was crippled and cut short by his imperfect, stunted, stereotyped views of Christian truth. Westley Hall, who married one of the Wesley sisters, was a disgrace both to his family and the Church; though it may be charitably hoped he died a penitent. John Whitelamb, another of Wesley's brothers-in-law, sank down into an ecclesiastical village drone. Gambold was a good man, though injured by the visionary and fanciful notions of the Moravians. Ingham was for many years one of the most successful evangelists, whose work was blessed to the conversion of multitudes of souls throughout England and Ireland; but by reason of certain ill-judged connections which he formed, his last days were not his best.

From year to year this band of brothers, the Oxford Methodists, drifted further and further apart in their views of doctrine and Church government, and at length were even brought into painful collision with each other; but, with the exception of Hall, they were all sincere, earnest, laborious ministers of Christ, while the Wesleys and Whitefield have attained a place in the history of the Church which will render their fame immortal.



CHRIST CHURCH MEADOW.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MISSION TO AMERICA.



A MAP OF THE SAVANNAH COUNTRY  
IN 1740.

**A Soul to be Saved.**—It was John Wesley's intention after he had obtained his Fellowship at Lincoln College to spend his life at Oxford in efforts to save his soul. This was all the time uppermost in his mind. He studied the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures to save his soul; he fasted and prayed to save his soul; he preached in churches and taught in prisons to save his soul; he fed the hungry and clothed the naked to save his soul; he led a life of severity and self-mortification and made himself the object of ridicule and abuse to save his soul. Poor man! He had a troublesome soul on his hands, and did not know what to do with it.

His old father, now about to die, greatly desired John to succeed him in the Epworth rectorship, but the son resisted all his fatherly entreaties on the plea that he could save his soul better at Oxford than at Epworth. His father then urged that his ordination vows made it his duty to take a parish as soon as one could be had; whereupon he yielded the point, for duty was, with him, the end of all argument, and applied for the Epworth "living;" but his overmuch severity in religion had reached the ears of certain men who had the power of influencing the appointment, and his application was refused. Now his way was clear; he could stay in Oxford, give himself up to pious studies and labors, be a



Methodist of the saintliest sort, and, somehow or other, manage to save his soul.

**The Colony of Georgia.**—On the 25th of April, 1733, Samuel Wesley died, and after the burial his son John went up to London, where a strange experience awaited him.

Just at this time the project of James Edward Oglethorpe (afterward General) for colonizing a crowd of poor debtors, who by his influence had been released from the prisons of England, was receiving much attention. Those were the days of harsh government. The gallows was the penalty for petty thefts; thousands of men in Great Britain rotted in prison for the misfortune of being poor; a small debt was quite enough to expose a struggling debtor to the penalty of imprisonment, and an indiscreet bargain doomed many a well-meaning dupe to lifelong confinement; for, once within the walls of a debtors' prison, a poor wretch was often as completely lost to the world as if he had been in his grave.

Oglethorpe, whose attention had been attracted by this great abuse, obtained a Parliamentary Commission to inquire into the state of the English prisons, the result of which was, that a large number of debtors were released from confinement and restored to light and liberty.

But what was to be done with these people, to whom, indeed, the prison had opened its doors, but against whom all other doors were now shut?

There was still a small strip of sea-coast in America which had not been "granted" to any body, bounded by the Savannah River on the north and the Altamaha on the south; and here, by royal charter, was located the Colony of Georgia; the country being vested in a board of twenty-one trustees for a period of twenty-one years, "in trust for the poor." The sum of thirty-six thousand pounds was raised by public subscription to aid this popular charity, ten thousand of it being a donation from the Bank of England, and in the month of November, 1733, the first ship-load of superfluous English poverty, comprising one hundred and twenty persons, with Oglethorpe at their head, landed at the spot where now stands the beautiful city of Savannah.

The next year their numbers were increased by a company of persecuted Protestants from Saltzburg, in Germany, whose afflictions coming to the knowledge of the English Society for the Propagation



of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, led to the proposal to settle them also in Georgia; which kind offer they joyfully accepted, and soon became a thriving community, fearing God and loving one another. Three other ship-loads of emigrants subsequently reached the colony; one of Scotch Highlanders, one of Moravians, while the third was a mixed multitude, which had been attracted by the accounts of this open door into a new world, and with whom Oglethorpe returned a second time to America, taking with him the pious young "Fellow of Lincoln College" as their spiritual adviser.

John Wesley was sent out to Georgia by the Society above-mentioned as a kind of missionary chaplain, at a salary of £50 a year. He was accompanied by his brother, Charles Wesley; by Ingham, one of the Holy Club from Oxford; and by a young man named Delamotte, who had become a great admirer of Mr. Wesley, and who, against the wishes of his family, turned his back on a good business opening at home to become the servant of this missionary in the wilds of North America.

But what has changed the purpose of this Oxford devotee?

Nothing. The purpose is not changed; only the means of its accomplishment.

Here are his own words relative to this momentous step out from his beloved Oxford into the Western wilderness:—



"My chief motive is the hope of saving my own soul. I hope to learn the true sense of the Gospel by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text, no vain philosophy to corrupt it, no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasing truths. They have no party, no interest to serve, and are, therefore, fit to receive the Gospel in

its simplicity. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God."

Fine people, those savages! A greater amount of pious ignorance and absurdity it would be hard to express in the same number of words.



After setting forth how much easier he expects it will be for him to lead a life of sanctity in the wilderness, where most of his temptations will be removed, he continues in the following strain:—

“I have been a grievous sinner from my youth up, and am yet laden with foolish and hurtful desires; but I am assured, if I be once converted myself, God will then employ me both to strengthen my brethren and to preach his name to the Gentiles.

“I cannot hope to attain the same degree of holiness here which I may there. I shall lose nothing I desire to keep. . . . It will be no small thing to be able, without fear of giving offense, to live on water and the fruits of the earth . . . The pomp and show of this world have no place in the wilds of America.”

In all this ridiculous letter there is not one word about a sense of duty. So far as it is possible to gather from Wesley's own writings, he never felt that God was sending him across the sea, or that the American heathen had any claim upon him; it was only one of his many schemes of self-mortification to help him in saving his soul.

Was it, then, a delusion of the devil?

Judging by his ridiculous failure, one might answer, Yes. Judging, also, by his distinguished unfitness for such a mission at this period of his life, it would be easy to reach the same conclusion.

But there is another side to the question. The Reverend John Wesley is now thirty-two years old; a man as notable for sanctity as he is eminent for learning. He is a great honor to his college, and a valuable assistant in its scholastic work. He knows more of books and less of human nature than any other man in Oxford whose record has come down to our times; he is a presbyter of the Church of England, on which account he claims that he belongs to a superior order of mortals, though as yet he does not think himself in a state of saving grace, and has only an official ministry to offer; and so completely is his common sense blindfolded by the rituals of his Church and his own clerical pretensions, that if he is ever to amount to any thing as a minister of the Gospel those traditional bandages must be torn from his eyes.

A more remarkable mixture of learning and ignorance, of piety and pretension, of dogmatism and devotion, than that which made up the character of John Wesley at this transitional period of his life, it



is difficult to imagine. He is turning his back upon those surroundings and duties which are most congenial to his scholarly tastes and habits, and actually anticipating with pleasure a life among a crowd of savages. Civilization has its vices, which interfere with his great desire for holiness; he therefore eagerly exchanges it for barbarism, and dreams of saving his soul with the help of an Indian hut. He is taking his life in his hand, half expecting, and wholly willing, to lose it. He will preach for awhile among the colonists of Savannah, till he finds how to begin his mission among the Indians, of whom he thinks as so many "little children," destitute both of opinions and character, "willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God;" and when this path opens before him he will bid adieu to the temptations of this vain and wicked world, and bury himself in the woods.

All this he deliberately chooses to do without any call of God to a missionary life, without any fitness for it except heroism, without any love for it except what results from his misapprehension of it, without any especial love for the souls to whom he proposes to minister, and without any clear sense of love for God, in whose name he is going to do it: he is simply about to make a grand experiment, to see if something will not come of it that will help him to save his soul.

But if his self-appointed mission be only a piece of devout self-righteousness, he fulfills it in a manner worthy of admiration. He is traveling the wrong road, but it is a splendid sight to see how he pushes on; his zeal is not according to knowledge, but his Father in heaven understands this singular child, and is giving him a chance to toss upon the stormy bosom of the ocean, to dash his head against the trees of the wilderness, to wade through swamps, to freeze and starve, to be duped and abused, and be made the scapegoat of a scandalous quarrel, all with the evident purpose of widening the scope of his vision, driving some of the pious conceit out of him, showing him how weak and contemptible a thing is merely official religion, and, withal, of opening his understanding, through the teachings of some of the simple-minded Moravians, to that pivotal doctrine of the Wesleyan revival—the regeneration of the penitent sinner by the power of the Holy Ghost through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was arranged that Charles Wesley should go out to Georgia as the Governor's secretary, and he now took orders as a clergyman, that



he might assist his brother in his ministry. The two Wesleys, Ingham, and Delamotte, made a solemn agreement in writing to the effect that in order to maintain unity among themselves, no one of the four should undertake any thing of importance without consulting with the other three; that all questions should be decided by vote; and that in case of an even division of opinion the matter, after being laid before the Lord, should be decided by lot.

During the voyage they were as methodical and industrious as ever; dividing their time, from four o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock in the evening, with brief allowance for meals, between prayers, reading the Scriptures, writing sermons, preaching, catechising the children on board, giving personal instruction to chosen individuals among the crew and passengers, and attendance upon the daily religious services of the Moravians, who, with their bishop, David Nitschmann, were going out to join their brethren in Georgia.

On one occasion the ship encountered a terrible storm, and the sea broke over the deck while the Moravians were singing their evening hymn. The other passengers screamed with terror, but the Moravians calmly sang on, as if nothing had happened. After the service was over, Wesley said to one of them:—

“Were you not afraid?”

“I thank God, no,” was his reply.

“But were not your women and children afraid?”

“No. Our women and children are not afraid to die.”

This incident made a profound impression upon Wesley's mind, for he records it in his Journal with the remark, “This is the most glorious day which I have ever seen.”

These Moravians were “regular” Christians, having the three orders of the ministry, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, according to the English and the Romish ritual; therefore John Wesley with a clear conscience joined in their worship of God, which he would by no means have done had they been Presbyterians, Baptists, or Quakers. They were far in advance of him in the experience of salvation, and he had the sense to see it, and the humility to confess it, and also to ask advice of their chief men in respect to the work he had laid out for himself in America.

The voyage from Cowes to the Savannah River was made in fifty-



seven days, during which Oglethorpe treated the missionaries with great kindness. On one occasion, when some of the officers and gentlemen on board took liberties with Wesley and his friends, Oglethorpe indignantly exclaimed, "What mean you, sirs? Do you take these gentlemen for tithe-pig parsons? They are gentlemen of learning and respectability. They are my friends, and whoever offers an affront to them insults me." This was quite enough, and thereafter the Methodists were treated with respect.



A WORD IN SEASON.

**A Word in Season.**—Oglethorpe was irritable, but noble hearted and generous. One day Wesley, hearing an unusual noise in the General's cabin, entered to inquire the cause; on which the angry soldier cried:

"Excuse me, Mr. Wesley; I have met with a provocation too great to bear. This villain, Grimaldi, [an Italian servant,] has drunk



nearly the whole of my Cyprus wine, the only wine that agrees with me, and several dozens of which I had provided for myself. But I am determined to be revenged. The rascal shall be tied hand and foot, and be carried to the man-of-war; for I never forgive."

"Then," said Wesley, with great calmness and gentleness, "I hope, sir, you never sin."

Oglethorpe was confounded. His vengeance was gone. He put his hand into his pocket, pulled out a bunch of keys and threw them at Grimaldi, saying, "There, villain! take my keys, and behave better for the future."

**Wesley's Scholarship.**—The remarkable powers of mind possessed by John Wesley are indicated by these facts: There was a large number of German-speaking people among the ship's company, his Moravian friends and others, and he at once commenced the study of the German language, that he might converse with, and preach to, them. When he reached Savannah he discovered some Frenchmen and Italians also, and toward the close of his polyglot mission we find him publicly as well as privately instructing them all in their own tongues.

The following is a list of his Sunday appointments at Savannah:—

- "1. English prayers from five o'clock till half-past six.
- "2. Italian prayers at nine.
- "3. A sermon and the Holy Communion for the English, from half-past ten to about half-past twelve.
- "4. The service for the French at one; including prayers, psalms, and Scripture exposition.
- "5. The catechising of the children at two.
- "6. The third English service at three.
- "7. After this a meeting in his own house for reading, prayer, and praise.
- "8. At six o'clock the Moravian service began, which he was glad to attend, not to teach, but to learn." \*

Besides this he held two services for the Germans during the week, one at the village of Hampstead and one in the town of Savannah, and two services for the French, at the village of Highgate and in town. He afterward studied Spanish in order to converse with some Spanish Jews.

\* TYRMAN'S "Life and Times of Wesley."



Wesley's mission opened prosperously. His census of his new parish in 1737, gives the number at five hundred and eighteen souls. The only other settlements in Georgia were the French and German villages above named, which lay four or five miles to the south-west; the little hamlet called Thunderbolt, six miles to the south-east; the Moravian town of New Ebenezer, nineteen miles distant; Darien, the settlement of the Scotch Highlanders, eighty miles, and Frederica, on St. Simond's Island, a hundred miles to the south of Savannah.

Besides these there were some thousands of Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, and Uchee Indians within the limits of the colony; a lazy, drunken, gluttonous, murderous crew, absolute pagans, sunk in all the depths of savagery, some of whom would occasionally make their appearance at the white settlements to trade, to beg, and to steal; but from first to last Wesley never found among them any of those docile little children of nature who were "ready to hear, and eager to do, the will of God;" and never during the nearly two years which he spent in America did he find how to make even a beginning of preaching the Gospel among them, they being determined "not to hear the great word which the white man had to teach." It was, therefore, necessary that he should devote himself wholly to the Europeans. His brother Charles and Mr. Ingham presently went with a few colonists to lay out the village of Frederica, above mentioned, and John Wesley and his devoted follower, Delamotte, began their pastoral work at Savannah.

**Troubles Thicken.**—But the people who smiled on him because of his friend, the Governor, soon began to frown on him because of himself. The doctrines and practices whose rigidity and severity had incensed a learned and church-going community like Oxford, were not likely to find favor among such a motley crowd as that in Oglethorpe's little domain of Georgia. He read morning and evening prayers publicly every day, preached very plain and searching sermons on Sunday, which cut to the bone, and caused a good many sinners to be "exceeding mad" against him for what they called his "satires upon particular persons." He organized another Holy Club, which met three times a week for Scripture reading, psalm-singing, and prayer, and he and young Delamotte each set up a little school.



Mr. Tyerman, in his admirable "Life and Times of John Wesley," relates this characteristic incident:—

Some of the boys in Mr. Delamotte's school were too poor to wear shoes and stockings, on which account those who could boast of being shod used to tease them for going barefoot. The teacher tried to correct this small cruelty, but failed, and reported his want of success to his master.

"I think I can cure it," said Wesley, "and if you will exchange schools with me I will try." Accordingly, the next Monday morning the teachers exchanged schools, and what was the surprise of Wesley's new scholars to see their teacher and minister coming to school barefoot! Before the week was ended it began to be fashionable in that school to dispense with shoes and stockings, and nothing further was heard of persecution on that account.

In writing home to his mother Mr. Wesley describes his new home as "pleasant beyond imagination, and exceedingly healthy," though he says that some of his parishioners are already very angry at him.

While the revolt against his spiritual authority was gathering strength his brother and his friend Ingham were meeting with similar trials at Frederica. The Reverend Charles began by magnifying his office and carrying out his ritualistic notions with a high hand. He also attempted the practical but impracticable office of settling the quarrels of certain scolding women; and in one way and another brought himself into such bad odor with these semi-barbarians that they actually denied him a place to sleep, and he was forced to make his bed on the ground.

They filled the ears of the Governor with stories against him, and in a short time the secretary was out of favor with his master, whereupon, having no visible protection, his few friends forsook him, he was charged with mutiny, and his life became so intolerable that within three weeks after his arrival at Frederica he dispatched Ingham to Savannah for advice. The elder brother made all haste to visit the scene of hostilities, but his office as peace-maker was a sad failure; for he had only just returned to Savannah when Charles made his appearance there, having been actually put to flight by the outrageous treatment of his parishioners. The brothers then exchanged their fields of labor, but in a month and a day John Wesley,



also, was forced to abandon his cure of souls at Frederica and to return to Savannah, having been, as he says, "betrayed, scorned, and insulted by those I had most labored to serve."

After five months Charles Wesley returned to England to beg for re-enforcements, and at the end of the first year Ingham followed him, having accomplished literally nothing of all the pious purposes with which they set out. John Wesley and his faithful Delamotte remained for another year, when they, too, were glad to escape under circumstances which his enemies for a hundred years have used to traduce Wesley's character and belittle his fame.

During the second year, in spite of the sad experience he had suffered, John Wesley kept on in his course of High-church dogmatism. With him a direction set down in the Prayer Book was in those days almost as binding as a text of Scripture; and by both these books, not by either without the other, he determined to stand or fall. He insisted on baptizing infants by immersion unless it was declared by the parents that they were too feeble to bear it; he would not allow persons to stand as godfathers and godmothers who did not certify that they had received the Holy Communion; he refused the Lord's Supper to those who did not give previous notice of their intention to present themselves; his visitation from house to house was looked upon as a systematic espionage; and it was charged that he attempted to establish a system of confessions, fasts, and other religious mortifications, which, though well enough in accordance with the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, were not at all agreeable to these Savannah colonists, whom their zealous minister was trying either to lead or drive into the kingdom of heaven. He rigidly excluded all Dissenters from the Holy Communion until they gave up their principles and submitted to be rebaptized by him; nevertheless he received Roman Catholics as good and regular Christians, on which account his enemies denounced him as a Romanist in disguise.

In Georgia, says Tyerman, "Wesley was treating Dissenters with the supercilious tyranny of a High-church bigot." He watched his flock too closely to suit their notions of liberty; he used his influence with the Governor to have strict laws enacted for the promotion of outward morality; and to such a degree did he cross the tastes and temper of the motley crowd, that certain of the baser sort were actually ready



to kill him. One stout virago invited him into her house, and, having overpowered him—for Wesley was a small, weak man—she cut off all the long auburn locks from one side of his head, leaving the other side untouched; and the persecuted man, by way of making the most of his sufferings for the truth's sake, actually appeared in the pulpit with his hair in this one-sided condition.

In January, 1737, Wesley and Delamotte paid another visit to Frederica, where they arrived after having lost their way in the woods, waded breast deep in swamps, and slept on the ground in their wet clothes, which were frozen stiff in the morning. But the people of



A SOUTHERN SWAMP.

that wretched settlement were as untractable as ever, and, after spending some twenty days among them, during which his life was repeatedly threatened, Wesley left the place forever, and returned to face his enemies at Savannah, who were preparing a long indictment against him.

**“An Escape from Matrimony.”**—To make matters worse, Wesley fell in love with a beautiful and accomplished young lady, who had first sought his help in learning the French language, and, later, his instruction in religion. She was the niece of the wife of



one Thomas Causton, an unscrupulous adventurer who had so far won the good opinion of Governor Oglethorpe as to be made chief magistrate of the colony, which office he administered with the most ridiculous state and dignity.

For a time the affairs of the two young people went on smoothly enough. Causton, who acted as the young lady's guardian, was pleased with the match, the Governor did all he could to help it on, the lady herself was an apt scholar, if not in her French, at least in her piety, and when her clerical lover fell sick she nursed him as faithfully as if she had been his wife already. Thus the poor missionary had one ray of sunshine in his dark and stormy sky. But, alas for him! This learned gentleman, who in after years developed so great a knowledge of men, never could understand a woman. He was quite impressible to female charms; used while at Oxford to write pious letters to high-born ladies signing himself "Cyrus," and addressing them by like fanciful titles:—chief of whom was "Aspasia," whose real name was Mary Granville, a niece of Lord Lansdowne, a beautiful, wealthy, and accomplished woman, who was half captivated by the extraordinary learning, piety, and courtesy of the chief of the Oxford Methodists. But "something happened"—nobody knows what—and John Wesley was still a bachelor; a little lonely, perhaps, and well he might be in such a wretched lodge in the wilderness.

Miss Sophia Christiana Hopkey was a proper young person, of a thoughtful and studious turn of mind, as anxious to learn as Wesley was to teach—the most promising lamb in all his troublesome flock; and this young missionary did just what almost any other man might have done in a similar case, that is to say, he bestowed a larger amount of pastoral care on this sweet parishioner than was strictly necessary, and suffered her to capture what there was left of his heart.

But his pupil, Delamotte, for some reason or other was displeased with the drift of affairs, and ventured to ask his master if he really meant to marry the girl; whereupon Wesley, who in such matters was ever of a doubtful mind, laid the subject before his friends, the Moravian elders. Delamotte was too active in the business, as appears from the fact that when Mr. Wesley appeared to submit his case before the synod of Moravians he found his pupil already there among them.



"Will you abide by our decision?" asked Bishop Nitschmann.

"I will," replied Mr. Wesley, after some hesitation.

"Then we advise you," said Nitschmann, "to proceed no further in the matter."

"The will of the Lord be done," responded Wesley; and from that time, says Moore, one of his biographers, "he avoided every thing that tended to continue the intimacy with Miss Hopkey, and behaved with the greatest caution toward her;" a course of conduct which might have been more to his credit if he had entered upon it earlier.

In Mr. Wesley's counsels to young Methodist preachers he lays down this rule: "Take no step toward marriage without consulting with your brethren;" a piece of extra scriptural advice which certainly was not supported by his experience in this case, unless, indeed, he was of the opinion that if he had consulted with the brethren at an earlier stage of the proceedings he might have saved himself a great deal of trouble; however that may be, it is certain that by publicly submitting this delicate question to the decision of the Moravian elders, and blindly binding himself to obey their will, he committed the supreme blunder in that list of absurdities which make up the record of his mission to America.

Of course the lady was indignant that her priestly lover, having won her, should ask the Moravian brethren whether or no he might take her, and she showed her resentment by immediately marrying another man, one Williamson, of whom Mr. Wesley, in his Journal, expresses this somewhat spiteful opinion:—

"March 8. Miss Sophy engaged herself to Mr. Williamson, a person not remarkable for handsomeness, neither for greatness, neither for wit, or knowledge, or sense, and, least of all, for religion."

Four days afterward they were married, and of this event the afflicted lover writes: "What thou doest, O Lord, I know not now, but I shall know hereafter." That he was deeply wounded there can be no doubt, for after a lapse of nearly fifty years, in looking back upon that sad experience he says: "I was pierced through as with a sword. But our comfort is, He that made the heart can heal the heart." It never for one moment appears to enter his mind what grief he may have caused the young lady whom he sacrificed to the opinions of men that had no right to judge the case at all, and his pious resignation is



a poor atonement for his manifest unfaithfulness to the woman he loved, whose affections he had sought, and who, according to all accounts, was every way worthy to be his wife.

If this had been the only unfortunate experience of this kind in the career of the great Methodist it might be possible to accept the above pious expressions as evidence of an exquisite agony, of life-long martyrdom, in consequence of his half-formed judgment that a priest ought not to marry, at least, not without the approval of his brethren; but this was his third love affair,\* and he afterward had two more rather notable ones, as we shall see, the last of which resulted in a hasty and ill-assorted marriage; therefore, it is difficult to be very much moved by these sorrowful words, or even to charge over to the Lord what was the plain result of his own misdoing. A heart once broken may be an object of tender sympathy, but a heart broken several times over, even though it be the heart of John Wesley, is somehow suggestive of frailty, as well as of affection.

Miss Sophy declares that when Wesley learned of her engagement to Williamson he renewed his addresses in the most vehement manner, and even offered to give up some of his severe, High-church practices, on account of which he had become so obnoxious to the colonists, and to settle down with her at Savannah!†—the personal character of this lady is highly praised by Mr. Wesley's chief biographer, who accepts her statement without contradiction—but after such behavior there was no pardon possible. Besides, she was now pledged to another, and, if Wesley was willing to break his vow to the Moravians, Miss Sophy would not break hers to her affianced husband.

It is not a little amusing to read in the solemn pages of some of Wesley's biographers the grave surmises of what calamities would have befallen if he had not "escaped" from this, and that, and the other love affair; how he would in one case have settled into a mere country parson, in another have come to be a life-long missionary to the Georgia Indians, etc. As if the Lord could not make use of John Wesley married as well as John Wesley single! Is not matrimony a means of grace? And has not God been able to make great use of other married men?

If there is any blessedness in "escaping" from impending matri-

\* "The Living Wesley," by Dr. Rigg.      † TYERMAN'S "Life and Times of Wesley," p. 149.



mony to which he by his own conduct was repeatedly "exposed," then John Wesley is entitled to be congratulated on his good fortune; but sensible men, and all women whatever, are more likely to look on such halting between two opinions as an evidence of pitiful weakness instead of providential protection. And why, on the latter supposition, was he suffered at last to fall into the hands of the widow Vazeille, who used actually to tear his hair?

Mrs. Williamson was still one of his parishioners, and when, some months after her marriage, he gave her some pastoral reproof, and at another time publicly repelled her from the Lord's Supper, her husband and her former guardian took up the quarrel, framed the indictment above mentioned, and cited the missionary to appear before his high mightiness, Mr. Chief Magistrate Causton for trial, on the charge of various priestly tyrannies, and especially for the affront to Mrs. Williamson, whose husband sued for damages for defamation to the amount of one thousand pounds.

The whole colony was in an uproar. It was said, of course, that Mr. Wesley had refused the Lord's Supper to the lady because she had refused to marry him; to which he replied that he had given her the Eucharist several times since her marriage, and that the reason of his refusal on this occasion was, that she did not give notice to him, according to the rubric in the Prayer Book, of her intention to present herself at the Lord's table, and, therefore, his act could not be understood in the light of a public defamation of her Christian character and standing; the more because he had treated several other persons in the same way. To the other charges he replied that the acts complained of were ecclesiastical in their character, and over such cases Mr. Justice Causton's court had no jurisdiction, notwithstanding that the grand jury of Savannah had found a true bill against him.

In the action for damages he prepared to defend himself, and demanded an early trial, but it was put over from time to time on various pretexts; and after the seventh postponement, the plaintiff, finding he could neither obtain justice nor be of any use as a minister under such conditions, gave up in despair, and announced his purpose of returning to England.

Upon this the magistrates demanded that he should give bail for his appearance when wanted, but Wesley still defied their authority,



and in return they gave orders that he should not be permitted to leave the colony, and forbidding any person to assist him in so doing. They also brought another minister to perform service in the parish, a Mr. Dixon, who was chaplain to some soldiers at Frederica; and thus practically supplanted Mr. Wesley in his office.

**Wesley's Farewell to Georgia.**—That same evening Wesley, with four other fugitives, who had reasons of their own for getting away, started in an open boat for Port Royal, in South Carolina; which place they reached after hard toiling and rowing by sea, and great hardships by land, on the 6th of December, 1737. On the 8th Mr. Delamotte rejoined his master, at Port Royal, when they took a small craft and started for the port of Charleston, which they reached on the 13th. On the 22d John Wesley bade a long good-bye to the inhospitable shores of North America, and on the 1st of February reached England, only one day after George Whitefield had set sail for the very colony that he had been compelled to leave.

It appears that when their much-abused minister had actually gone and left them, some of his old parishioners began to feel more kindly toward him, and managed to find a good word to say of him to his friend Whitefield, when he arrived; for Mr. Whitefield, in a letter from Georgia, says: "The good Mr. John Wesley has done in America is inexpressible. His name is very precious among the people, and he has laid a foundation that I hope neither men nor devils will ever be able to shake."

Foundation of what? Neither Mr. Whitefield nor any one else has ever been able to tell.

Mr. Wesley himself writes in a different strain.

"Many reasons I have to bless God for my having been carried to America, contrary to all my preceding resolutions. Hereby I trust he hath in some measure humbled me and proved me, and shown me what was in my heart. I went to America to convert the Indians; but O, who shall convert me? . . .

"This, then, I have learned in the ends of the earth—that I am fallen short of the glory of God; that my whole heart is altogether corrupt and abominable; . . . that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making an atonement for the least of those sins



which are more in number than the hairs of my head, that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves or they cannot abide his righteous judgment. . . . I have no hope but that if I seek I shall find Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." This strong statement he afterward modified by remarking that even then he had "the faith of a servant, but not of a son."

Blessed is the man who can learn wisdom from his own mistakes; and such a man was John Wesley. When he set out for Georgia he was brave enough to face all manner of death if thereby he could save his soul; when he returned he had the added courage to confess himself to have been in the wrong. Then he was compassing sea and land to save his own soul; now he is crying out to the Lord to save it for him.

He was also in a way to be cured of his dogmatism, though the progress was slow on account of the severity of the disease. In referring to his refusing the Holy Communion to a godly man at Savannah because he had not been baptized by a minister of his own order, Wesley, some ten years after, writes thus: "Can any one carry High-church zeal higher than this? And how well have I since been beaten with mine own staff."

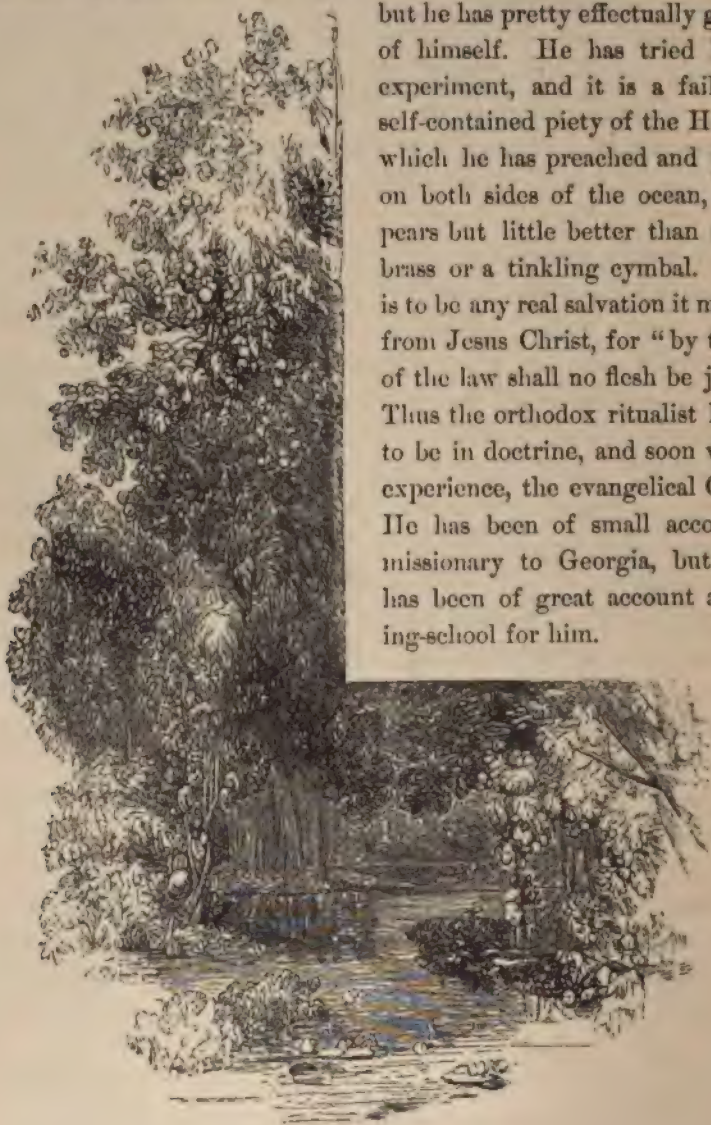
From this time he dwelt continually upon salvation as the gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ. His first sermon on his return to London was at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, from the text, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." His second was at St. Andrew's Church, Holborn, on "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." On both of which occasions he gave such offense that the doors of those churches were henceforth shut against him.

Truly those English Christians were hard to please. When at first he preached human virtue and sacramental holiness, they denounced him as a fanatic; and now, when he preaches the failure of human righteousness and the all-sufficiency of saving grace, they shut their pulpits against him. In the one case he cut into their worldliness, in the other he wounded their pride. He has not yet attained unto that



sense of personal salvation of which his Moravian friends have told him,

but he has pretty effectually gotten rid of himself. He has tried his great experiment, and it is a failure: the self-contained piety of the Holy Club, which he has preached and practiced on both sides of the ocean, now appears but little better than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. If there is to be any real salvation it must come from Jesus Christ, for "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." Thus the orthodox ritualist has come to be in doctrine, and soon will be in experience, the evangelical Christian. He has been of small account as a missionary to Georgia, but Georgia has been of great account as a training-school for him.





## CHAPTER V.

### WHITEFIELD ORDAINED, AND THE WESLEYS CONVERTED.

NO sooner were the Wesleys gone on their mission to Georgia than their chief pupil came to the front to begin that wonderful career on account of which it may be said of him, as was said of John the Baptist, "There was a man sent from God whose name was" George Whitefield.

On the 20th of June, 1736, Bishop Benson ordained him deacon, and he went forth to preach, with almost apostolic power, the gospel doctrine of regeneration. The "boy parson," as he was called, was but little past twenty-one years old when he took the holy vows of ordination in the old cathedral of his native town of Gloucester, concerning which event he writes to a friend, as follows:—

"I can call heaven and earth to witness that when the Bishop laid his hands upon me I gave myself up to be a martyr for Him who hung upon the cross for me. Known unto him are all future events and contingencies. I have thrown myself blindfold, and, I trust, without reserve, into his almighty hands."

Of his outfit of sermons, he says: "Never a poor creature set up with so small a stock. I thought I should have time to make at least a hundred sermons with which to begin my ministry. But so far from this being the case, I have not a single one except that which I made for a small society, and which I sent to a neighboring clergyman to convince him how unfit I was to take upon me the important work of preaching." This discourse, of which he had so poor an opinion, was on "The Necessity and Benefit of Religious Society," and three days afterward he preached it to a great congregation in the church where, in his infancy, he had been baptized.

The tapster of the Bell Inn was now come to be a parson! from standing behind the bar he was come to stand in the pulpit! and all Gloucester must needs come to hear the youthful prodigy, who was doing such great credit to their town. Here is his account of this maiden effort:—



"GLOUCESTER, *June 30, 1736.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND: Glory! glory! glory! be ascribed to the Triune God! Last Sunday, in the afternoon, I preached my first sermon in the Church of St. Mary de Crypt, where I was baptized, and also received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Curiosity, as you may easily guess, drew a large congregation together. The sight at first a little awed me, but I was comforted with a heart-felt sense of the divine Presence, and soon found the unspeakable advantage of having been accustomed to public speaking when a boy at school, and of exhorting and teaching the prisoners and poor people at their houses while at the University. By these means I was kept from being daunted overmuch. As I proceeded I could see that the fire kindled, till at last, though so young, and amid a crowd who knew me in my childish days, I was enabled to speak with some degree of gospel authority. A few mocked, but most for the present seemed struck; and I have since heard that a complaint has been made to the Bishop that I drove fifteen mad. The worthy prelate, as I am informed, wished that the madness might not be forgotten before next Sunday."

"He preached like a lion," was the comment of one of his simple-minded hearers on the "boy parson's" first sermon.

The Gloucester people greatly desired to have Mr. Whitefield settle permanently among them, but he declined all their kind plans and offers, and on the 30th of June returned to Oxford, where, a few days after, he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts. It was his intention to spend a few years at this seat of learning, but there was larger and better work laid out for him. The Rev. Mr. Broughton, one of the early members of the Holy Club, and now chaplain of The Tower, in London, wrote to him to come up and fill his place for a time, as he desired to be absent in the country, and young Whitefield, with great trembling, consented.

He had been but a month in London, preaching with great success, when letters came from the Wesleys in Georgia desiring that more ministers be sent out to their assistance, and at once the heart of Mr. Whitefield was fired with missionary zeal; but many friends who had noticed his wonderful power and genius advised him to remain in England. After his return to Oxford he received the offer of a very



profitable curacy in London, which he declined, though he was almost penniless and somewhat in debt, for no other apparent reason than that he did not hear the voice of God calling him in that direction.

The return of Mr. Charles Wesley from Georgia in December of that year was the signal for Whitefield to offer himself as a missionary to America. In his letter to that gentleman he ventures to ask him why he chose to go out as secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe instead of going in the character of a laborer in the Lord's vineyard, when by his own account there was such great need of such godly service—a question which must have probed the heart of this double-minded man very deeply. “Did the Bishop ordain us, my dear friend, to write bonds, receipts, etc., or to preach the gospel? Or dare we not trust God to provide for our relations without endangering, or at least retarding, our spiritual improvement? But I go too far. You know I was always heady and self-willed.”

This brief extract is of value in showing the utter forgetfulness of all things else with which Mr. Whitefield was throwing himself into his work, and at the same time it gives a hint of the filial duty which the Wesleys so faithfully performed toward their mother, now a widow, and dependent on her sons for support.

The offer of the “boy-parson” having been accepted, he made ready for immediate departure. The little fleet with which he was to sail was to take out some soldiers for the defense of British interests in the Southern Colonies of America against the Spaniards, who were beginning to trouble them; and as in those slow-going days such matters were not settled in haste, it was a whole year before every thing was quite ready and the three ships actually put to sea.

And an eventful year it proved; for in 1737 England was startled from its ecclesiastical slumbers as it never had been before. The little cloud which first appeared at Oxford now overspread the heavens, and blessings began to pour down in torrents. This young missionary, whose intended departure across the sea was an excuse for his irregularity, became a roving evangelist, and so wonderful was the success that attended his labors that his name was heralded all over the kingdom. He was soon in great request as a preacher of charity sermons on behalf of schools, orphanages, and the like. and, with a



careful foresight of what he might need in his new and distant parish, he also improved the opportunity by raising about three hundred pounds for his Georgia mission.

But the great business of this young preacher, whose lips had been touched by a live coal from God's altar, was to disseminate Methodism throughout England. He raised a thousand pounds or so for charity, because people would give to him when they would not to another man; but he had a higher mission than to carry a contribution box, high as that much-abused mission may be. The collections were only incidental, like the miracles of the apostles, and in both cases they served to establish the power and authority of the minister, while the real business in hand was to preach the Gospel to the poor; in which work Whitefield far excelled all men who had ever preached in that kingdom.

**Whitefield's Theology.**—The burden of the English pulpit in those days was morality toward God and loyalty to the king. The people were exhorted to be good and they would be happy; a doctrine which is well enough as far as it goes, but which falls lamentably short of the purposes for which the Gospel was ordained. The doctrine of regeneration was not then, and is not now, a very popular one among the English clergy. The pious and pugnacious Toplady, afterward one of the thorns in Wesley's side, has been quoted to the effect that fifty years before his day "a converted minister in the Establishment was as great a wonder as a comet;" and now, also, the case was very much the same.

This was, however, the doctrine of all others which Whitefield knew how to preach. His religious experience was not one of those faint, intermittent, long-drawn, half-unconscious processes of grace which certain orthodox religious teachers (so-called) set forth as the appropriate thing for all persons who wish to serve God elegantly and easily. He had been born again, and he knew it; knew when, and where, and by what power; he had passed suddenly from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of God's favor; he had been transformed by the renewing of his mind; the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon him; he had bathed in seas of joy and reveled in floods of glory; no wonder, then, that for a time he preached little else but regeneration.



This was almost like preaching a new religion to the people, so little had they heard of a salvation which is God's free gift; which begins by giving sinners new hearts, and which changes the motives, as well as the manner, of their lives. No wonder, therefore, that the churches in which he preached were crowded almost to suffocation, and that multitudes were obliged to go away for want of even standing room, or a chance to look in at the doors or windows. At Gloucester, Bristol, and Bath in particular, he was overwhelmed with people, not only those who came to listen to his wonderful sermons, but those who came to him for personal instruction; while the "inquiry meetings" in those early beginnings of the Methodist revival were worthy patterns for those of our own time.

The second sermon Whitefield ever preached, and the first he ever published, was upon the text, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature;" in which he likens this mystery to the work wrought in the body of Naaman the leper. The regenerate man, or the man who is in Christ, he says, is indeed the self-same man, but he has been "made anew." Another of his sermons was from the text, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," which, like many another discourse of his, was made to serve the double purpose of awakening sinners and drawing unprecedented sums of money from their purses for the treasury of the Lord.

His charity sermon on the "Widow's Two Mites" would seem to have been rather a practical affair; but Mr. Whitefield speaks of it as other men speak of their most successful spiritual appeals, and says that under it "God bowed the hearts of the hearers as the heart of one man." After which we are prepared for his next sentence, "Almost all, as I was told by the collectors, offered most willingly." One of his notable sermons was upon "Early Piety;" another, on the "Nature and Necessity of the New Birth;" another, which he preached to the soldiers in the great cabin of his ship at Gibraltar *en route* to America, was on "The Eternity of Hell Torments;" but whether he were preaching of hell or heaven, of sin or salvation, for charity or otherwise, he kept his hearers continually face to face with the Scriptures, with the personal government of God, with the actual facts of eternal life and death, and with the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.



There is one word which, better than any other, describes Whitefield's preaching:—supernatural.

In his day it was usual for preachers to measure the invisible by the visible, and attempt to discern spiritual truths by natural means. Not so with Whitefield. He dwelt among the divine realities which he found described in the word of God, and by hearing him relate his experience people began to take in the idea that salvation amounted to something; that it was real and tangible; not the unconscious effect of sacraments administered by the clergy, but a divine communication; Christ in the soul, hell put under foot, and heaven actually begun.



GIBRALTAR.

After some months he went up to London to see if his expedition were not ready to sail, and here, as in the provinces, he was set upon to preach charity sermons, some of the London churches being opened to him on account of his money-raising abilities, which would otherwise have been closed against him on account of his "extravagant" notions about the conversion of sinners. Two of the city clergy offered him the use of their pulpits if he would cut out certain parts of his sermon in which he treated of regeneration; but, said the boy-parson, "This I had no freedom to do, so they continued my opposers."



Unlike his teachers, the two Wesleys, Mr. Whitefield was on friendly terms with Dissenters, some of whom used to invite the young minister to their houses to commune with him on his favorite doctrine of regeneration. "If the doctrine of the new birth and justification by faith was preached powerfully in the Church," said they, "there would be but few Dissenters in England."

Whitefield says he found their conversation "savory," and imagined the best way to "bring them over was not by bigotry and railing, but by moderation and love and undissembled holiness of life." But this did not at all suit the High-church clergy of the metropolis, one of whom called him a "pragmatical rascal," and denounced the whole body of Dissenters in savagely apostolic style; that is to say, in the style of those half-fledged apostles who forbade the casting out of devils by one who did not belong to their own company.

In spite of this, and, indeed, partly because of it, Whitefield's popularity increased till it became almost impossible for him to walk the London streets on account of the crowd that gathered about him. He says: "I was constrained to go from place to place in a coach to avoid the hosannas of the multitude. They grew quite extravagant in their applause, and had it not been for my compassionate High-priest, popularity would have destroyed me. I used to plead with him to take me by the hand and lead me through this fiery furnace. He heard my request, and gave me to see the vanity of all commendations but his own."

A report was circulated by his jealous enemies that the Bishop of London, at the request of the clergy, was about to silence this young enthusiast; but when he waited on that dignitary to inquire about it he found that no such sword was hanging over his head. Bishop Gibson was a man of sound judgment and real piety, whose great power and influence, both in Church and State, led his enemies to call him the "London Pope;" and with this prelate on his side the young missionary had nothing to fear at the hands of curates and rectors, who hated the new preaching because it showed them to be still in their sins.

**Praying Without a Book.**— All this while Mr. Whitefield had tried to keep within the usages and traditions of the Establishment. He read prayers out of the Prayer Book in all public serv-



ices; but on one occasion, in a little meeting with some friends, his overburdened soul broke out of ritualistic bounds, and for the first time he attempted to pray *extempore*. "Some time, I think in October," says he, "we began to set apart an hour every evening to intercede with the great Head of the Church to carry on the work begun, and for the circle of our acquaintance, according as we knew their circumstances required. I was mouth unto God, and he only knows what enlargement I felt in that divine employ. Once we spent the whole night in prayer and praise, and many a time at midnight, and at one in the morning, after I had been wearied almost to death in preaching, writing, and conversation, and going from place to place, God imparted new life to my soul, and enabled me to intercede with him for an hour and a half and two hours together. The sweetness of that exercise made me compose my sermon on 'Intercession.'"

**Whitefield Sails for Georgia.**—On the 6th of January, 1738, Whitefield, having been duly appointed to the cure of souls in Savannah, and having persistently declined all the advantageous propositions which loving friends and wealthy admirers could make to detain him, amid the tears and prayers of the multitudes, who literally blocked his path, went on board his ship at Gravesend and set his face toward America.

**The Conversion of Charles Wesley.**—Among the Methodists of America it has always been regarded as a strange thing for a minister to come into the holy office without a new heart. God grant that it may always be so! But the first form of Oxford Methodism was nothing but a desperate human effort after holiness, and none of the Holy Club except Whitefield had thus far experienced that divine mystery, the new birth.

During the most of this notable year, 1737, Charles Wesley had been in England, working and worrying over Georgia affairs.

The wretched state of mind in which at this time he was living will appear from the following extract from his Journal:—

"January 22, 1737. I called upon Mrs. Pendarvis while she was reading a letter of my being dead. Happy for me had the news been true! What a world of misery would it have saved me!"

During the month of February he was very ill, and while lying at death's door Peter Böhler, one of the Moravian missionaries who was



in London waiting for a ship to Georgia, called upon him, and, after prayer, said to him:—

"You will not die now. Do you hope to be saved?"

"Yes," answered Charles Wesley.

"For what reason do you hope it?"

"Because I have used my best endeavors to serve God."

Böhler shook his head and said no more, at which Wesley thought him very uncharitable. "What!" he continues in his Journal, "are not my endeavors a sufficient ground of hope? Would he rob me of my endeavors? I have nothing else to trust to." \*

Here is another extract from his Journal, which shows him still in the dark:—

"April 25. Soon after five, as we were met in our little chapel, Mrs. Delamotte came to us. We sung, and fell into a dispute whether conversion were gradual or instantaneous. My brother John was very positive for the latter, and very shocking; mentioned some late instances of gross sinners believing in a moment. I was much offended at his worse than unedifying discourse. Mrs. Delamotte left us abruptly. I stayed, and insisted that a man need not know when first he had faith. His obstinacy in favoring a contrary opinion drove me at last out of the room. Mr. Broughton [one of the Oxford Methodists] was only not so much scandalized as myself."

Charles Wesley was neither the first nor the last to be scandalized by the "obstinacy" of wiser men than himself. It is rather "unedifying" to have one's prejudices overthrown by obstinate, uncomfortable facts.

Soon after this his illness increased upon him so that he had to be carried about in a chair; but he still kept on with his "endeavors," and "used" a great deal of prayer for conversion. Besides his friend Peter Böhler, there was one Mr. Bray, a Smithfield brazier, an ignorant man but a happy believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, to whose house he was carried, and who showed him the way of faith more perfectly, whereupon he began to cry out to God most earnestly, and to beg that Christ would come to him and save his soul. The following brief notes from his Journal set forth his progressive state of mind:—

\* JACOBSON'S "Life of Charles Wesley," p. 110.



"May 13. I waked without Christ, yet still desirous of finding him. At night my brother came, exceeding heavy. I forced him, as he had often forced me, to sing a hymn to Christ, and almost thought He would come while we were singing."

"May 14. Found much comfort in prayer and in the Word. I longed to find Christ, that I might show him to all mankind. Several persons called to-day and were convinced of unbelief. Some of them afterward went to Mr. Broughton, and were soon made as easy as Satan and their own hearts could wish."

"May 17. To-day I first saw 'Luther on the Galatians.' Who would believe our Church had been founded upon this important article of justification by faith alone! I am astonished I should ever think this a new doctrine. I spent some hours this evening in private with Martin Luther, who was greatly blessed to me. I labored, waited, and prayed to feel, 'Who loved *me* and gave himself for *me*!' When nature, near exhausted, forced me to bed, I opened the book upon 'For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness.' After this comfortable assurance that he would come and would not tarry, I slept in peace."

The "opening of the book" was one of the customs of the Holy Club. They treated the Bible as a holy oracle to be consulted on all occasions, and for the settlement of all spiritual questions. The manner of doing it was by opening the book at random, and reading the first passage on which the eye happened to rest. This habit is frequently referred to in the Journals of the Wesleys, and sometimes in that of Whitefield. It was one of the "superstitious practices" alleged against them by their enemies, and often apologized for by their friends, though God seems at times to have greatly comforted them thereby.

"Sunday, May 21, 1738. The Day of Pentecost. I waked in hope and expectation of His coming. At nine my brother and some friends came, and sang a hymn to the Holy Ghost. My comfort and hope were hereby increased. In about half an hour they went. I betook myself to prayer, the substance as follows: "O Jesus, thou hast said, '*I will come unto you.*' Thou hast said, '*I will send the Comforter unto you.*' Thou hast said, '*My Father and I will come unto you, and make our abode with you.*' Thou art God, who canst



not lie. I wholly rely upon thy most true promise. Accomplish it in thy time and manner." After this prayer, as he was composing himself to sleep, one of his friends, moved by what he thought to be the direction of the Lord, came to the door of his room and recited these words in his hearing:—

"IN THE NAME OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, ARISE AND BELIEVE, AND THOU SHALT BE HEALED OF ALL THY INFIRMITIES."

"O that Christ would but speak thus to me! I cried, feeling, at the same time, a strange palpitation of heart. I said, yet feared to say, 'I believe! I believe!'"

His friend and host, Mr. Bray, being sent for, came, and "opened the book" again at these words: "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." The two friends then prayed together, after which Wesley "opened the book" for himself; first at the text, "And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly my hope is ever in thee;" and next his eye caught these words, "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God."

"I now," he continues, "found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ. My temper for the rest of the day was mistrust of my own great, but before unknown, weakness. I saw that by faith I stood, and [that it was] the continual support of faith which kept me from falling. I went to bed still sensible of my own weakness, (I humbly hope to be more and more so,) yet confident of Christ's protection."

Thus this Oxford scholar, this ordained clergyman, this "successor of the apostles," this "holy" man, was forced to lay down all trust in his own "endeavors," and to grope in the dark for the knowledge of that Gospel of which he was already an accredited teacher, and to learn, at last, through the teachings of an ignorant Smithfield brazier, and one of the poor women of his humble household, the way of being saved through faith in Jesus Christ. The old fire of Pentecost was kindled anew in his soul on this anniversary of that glorious day. His body also, as well as his soul, was that day healed; for John Wesley writes: "I received the surprising news that my brother had found rest to his soul. His bodily strength returned, also, from that hour;" and then he piously adds, "Who is so great a God as our God?"



**The Conversion of Rev. John Wesley.**—John, the

SOUTH LEIGH CHURCH,

In which John Wesley preached his first Sermon.

elder brother, was only four days behind the younger in entering the kingdom of God. For years he had possessed religion enough to make him miserable, as well as to enable him to make other people so. He was the holiest man of the Holy Club; but his Pharisaism had been already broken down by what he had learned in America; and he had reached the point of believing that there is such a work as regeneration, wrought by the Holy Spirit, and that this

work may be done instantly the moment a sinner believes on Jesus Christ with all his heart. He confesses himself to have been greatly humbled, and professes his desire for "that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it." From the Moravians in Georgia, and from the Moravian priest, Peter Böhler, in London, he had learned something of the righteousness which is by faith; something of a sense of pardon which gives constant peace, and something of a work of the Holy Ghost upon the soul which gives dominion over sin. At first he was surprised, and resisted these truths as the inventions of man,



but the faithful Peter Böhler plied him with texts of Scripture and facts of Christian experience till the master of logic was utterly driven from his former conclusions, and brought up face to face with his privilege and duty of immediate and conscious salvation, as the free gift of God.

Why he should have been "surprised" to learn that his brother Charles had attained this experience it is difficult to imagine, unless there was, after all, a lurking doubt in his mind of the truth of the doctrine he had begun to defend. But here was another precious proof of its soundness; now he was sure of his ground. He did not possess this saving faith, but, according to the advice of his friend Peter, he began to preach it till he should have it, and then, because he had it, he could preach it all the more.

About this time he wrote down some good resolutions with regard to his own behavior, and soon after wrote them over again, as if the first writing were not strong enough to hold. Here they are:—

"1. To use absolute openness and unreserve with all I should converse with.

"2. To labor after continued seriousness; not willingly indulging myself in any the least levity of behavior, or in laughter—no, not for a moment.

"3. To speak no word which does not tend to the glory of God: in particular, not to talk of worldly things. Others may: nay, must. But what is that to thee? and

"4. To take no pleasure which does not tend to the glory of God; thanking God every moment for all I do take, and, therefore, rejecting every sort and degree of it which I feel I cannot thank him *in* and *for*."

It is singular to note that while John Wesley was confessing his own want of saving faith he should be blessed of God in leading others into it; among the rest a condemned felon in Newgate, to whom he had at first refused to preach at all, on the ground that he had no faith in death-bed repentance, and repentance by a man about to be hanged was very much after that sort. His unlooked-for success with this prisoner led him to dwell on the theme of conscious pardon of sin through faith in the Redeemer in the discourses which he preached in some of the London churches, but the word that was so blessed



to the criminal was rejected by the more fortunate sinners who made up Wesley's London congregations, and, one after another, the doors of the London churches were closed against him. For instance, a few days after his sermon in St. Ann's Church, on "Free Salvation by Faith in the Blood of Christ;" he makes this entry in his Journal:—

"I was quickly apprised that at St. Ann's, likewise, I am to preach no more. So true did I find the words of a friend, wrote to my brother about this time: 'I have seen upon this occasion, more than ever I could have imagined, how intolerable the doctrine of faith is to the mind of man; and how peculiarly intolerable to *religious men*.'"



OLD NEWGATE PRISON, LONDON.

The "turning point" of John Wesley's experience is of such vital importance, not only to him, but to the whole history of the great revival of religion of which he was, under God, the chief promoter, that it is worthy the careful study of all who may open this volume; his own account of it is, therefore, transferred to these pages almost entire:—

"What occurred on Wednesday, 24, I think best to relate at large, after premising what may make it the better understood.

"I believe till I was about ten years old I had not sinned away that 'washing of the Holy Ghost' which was given me in baptism; having been strictly educated and carefully taught that I could only be saved "by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God;" in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed. And



those instructions, so far as they respected outward duties and sins, I gladly received, and often thought of. But all that was said to me of inward obedience, or holiness, I neither understood nor remembered. So that I was indeed as ignorant of the true meaning of the Law as I was of the Gospel of Christ.

"The next six or seven years were spent at school; where, outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers, morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by was, 1. Not being so bad as other people. 2. Having still a kindness for religion. And, 3. Reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers.

"Being removed to the University for five years, I still said my prayers both in public and in private, and read, with the Scriptures, several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and for the most part very contentedly, in some or other known sin: indeed, with some intermission and short struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot well tell what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had, unless by those transient fits of what many divines taught me to call repentance.

"When I was about twenty-two my father pressed me to enter into holy orders. At the same time the providence of God directing me to Kempis's 'Christian Pattern,' I began to see that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, very angry at Kempis for being too strict; though I read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before: and meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in



word or deed. I began to aim at, and pray for, inward holiness. So that now, 'doing so much, and living so good a life,' I doubted not but I was a good Christian.

"Removing soon after to another college, I executed a resolution which I was before convinced was of the utmost importance—shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins; I advised others to be religious according to that scheme of religion by which I modeled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. Law's 'Christian Perfection' and 'Serious Call,' although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet they convinced me more than ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul that every thing appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him, as I had never done before. And by my continued endeavor to keep his whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power, I was persuaded that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.

"In 1730 I began visiting the prisons; assisting the poor and sick in town; and doing what other good I could, by my presence or my little fortune, to the bodies and souls of all men. To this end I abridged myself of all superfluities, and many that are called necessities of life. I soon became a by-word for so doing, and I rejoiced that my name was cast out as evil. The next spring I began observing the Wednesday and Friday fasts, commonly observed in the ancient Church; tasting no food till three in the afternoon. And now I knew not how to go any further. I diligently strove against all sin. I omitted no sort of self-denial which I thought lawful: I carefully used, both in public and in private, all the means of grace at all opportunities. I omitted no occasion of doing good; I for that reason suffered evil. And all this I knew to be nothing, unless as it was directed toward inward holiness. Accordingly this, the image of God, was what I aimed at in all, by doing his will, not my own. Yet when, after continuing some years in this course, I apprehended myself to be near death, I could not find that all this gave me any comfort, or any assurance of acceptance with God. At this I was



then not a little surprised; not imagining I had been all this time building on the sand, nor considering that 'other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid' by God, 'even Christ Jesus.'

"In this refined way of trusting to my own works and my own righteousness, (so zealously inculcated by the mystic writers,) I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort or help therein, till the time of my leaving England. On shipboard, however, I was again active in outward works; where it pleased God of his free mercy to give me twenty-six of the Moravian brethren for companions, who endeavored to show me 'a more excellent way.' But I understood it not at first. I was too learned and too wise. So that it seemed foolishness unto me. And I continued preaching, and following after, and trusting in, that righteousness whereby no flesh can be justified.

"All the time I was at Savannah I was thus beating the air. Being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, which, by a living faith in him, bringeth salvation 'to every one that believeth,' I sought to establish my own righteousness; and so labored in the fire all my days. I was now properly 'under the law;' I knew that 'the law' of God was 'spiritual; I consented to it, that it was good.' Yea, 'I delighted in it, after the inner man.' Yet was I 'carnal, sold under sin.' Every day was I constrained to cry out, 'What I do, I allow not: for what I would, I do not; but what I hate that I do. To will is' indeed 'present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me;' even 'the law in my members, warring against the law of my mind,' and still 'bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.'

"In this vile, abject state of bondage to sin I was indeed fighting continually, but not conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin; now it was unwillingly; but still I served it. I fell, and rose, and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome, and in heaviness; sometimes I overcame, and was in joy. For as in the former state I had some foretastes of the terrors of the law, so had I in this, of the comforts of the Gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace, which had now continued above ten years, I had many remarkable returns to prayer; especially when I was in trouble: I had many



sensible comforts; which are indeed no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still 'under the law,' not 'under grace;' (the state most who are called Christians are content to live and die in:) for I was only striving with, not freed from, sin; neither had I the witness of the Spirit with my spirit, and could not; for I 'sought' it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.'

"In my return to England, January, 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief; and that the gaining a true, living faith was the 'one thing needful' for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object; I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was wholly void of this faith; but only thought I had not enough of it. So that when Peter Böhler, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ, (which is but one,) that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it, 'dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness,' I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had not faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this. Therefore I disputed with all my might, and labored to prove that faith might be where these were not; especially where the sense of forgiveness was not: for all the Scriptures relating to this I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all Presbyterians who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw, no one could, in the nature of things, have such a sense of forgiveness, and not *feel* it. But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.

"When I met Peter Böhler again he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired, namely, Scripture and experience. I first consulted the Scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, endeavoring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages; I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, 'that experience would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those Scriptures. Nor could I therefore allow it to be true, till I found some living witnesses of it.' He replied, he could show



me such at any time; if I desired it, the next day. And accordingly the next day he came again with three others, all of whom testified, of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from all present, sins. They added with one mouth that this faith was the gift, the free gift, of God; and that he would surely bestow it upon every soul who earnestly and perseveringly sought it. I was now thoroughly convinced; and by the grace of God I resolved to seek it unto the end: 1. By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon *my own* works or righteousness, on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. 2. By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace continual prayer for this very thing, justifying saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for *me*; a trust in him as *my* Christ, as *my* sole justification, sanctification, and redemption.

"I continued thus to seek it (though with strange indifference, dullness, and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning that I opened my Testament on those words, 'There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, even that ye should be partakers of the divine nature.' 2 Pet. i, 4. Just as I went out I opened it again on those words, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul's. The anthem was, 'Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice; O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? For there is mercy with thee; therefore shalt thou be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.'

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate-street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation: and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.



"I began to pray with all my might for those who had, in a more especial manner, despitefully used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there, what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, 'This cannot be faith; for where is thy joy?' Then was I taught that peace, and victory over sin, are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation; but that, as to the transports of joy that usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth them, according to the counsels of his own will.

"After my return home I was much buffeted with temptations; but cried out, and they fled away. They returned again and again. I as often lifted up my eyes, and He 'sent me help from his holy place.' And herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving, yea, fighting with all my might under the law, as well as under grace. But then I was sometimes, if not often, conquered; now, I was always conqueror.

"Thursday, 25. The moment I awaked, 'Jesus, Master,' was in my heart and in my mouth; and I found all my strength lay in keeping my eye fixed upon him, and my soul waiting on him continually. Being again at St. Paul's in the afternoon, I could taste the good word of God in the anthem, which began, 'My song shall be always of the loving-kindness of the Lord: with my mouth will I ever be showing forth thy truth from one generation to another.' Yet the enemy injected a fear, 'If thou dost believe, why is there not a more sensible change?' I answered, (yet not I,) 'That I know not. But this I know, I have "now peace with God," and I sin not to-day, and Jesus my Master has forbid me to take thought for the morrow.'"

**Wesley at Herrnhut.**—In nothing is the grace of God more manifest than in changing John Wesley, the recent High-church bigot, into a docile, teachable inquirer after the truth. It was hard for this learned priest to become a "little child," but all things are possible with God.

Being now converted and saved, one of his first steps was to seek further instruction in the things of God from the Moravian brethren, whose chief settlement was the famous little community of Herrnhut,\*

\* Watch Hill.



in Upper Lusatia, near the borders of Bohemia. This settlement was made by a company of Lutheran converts, who were compelled to fly for their lives before the soldiers of the Pope and the devil, in Moravia, and who were afforded an asylum in Saxony, and a home on



JOHN WESLEY AND COUNT ZINZENDORF.

the estates of Nickolas Ludwig, Count of Zinzendorf. This nobleman, who was also a Saxon bishop, was not only the patron of this band of exiles, but was otherwise largely devoted to works of charity



and religion. He maintained an orphanage near his castle at Marienborn, and he afterward claimed that from his own estates he had sent out three hundred preachers of the Gospel into all parts of the world. This was the origin of that body of Christians now known as the United Brethren.

In the company of these devout believers, who, in spite of Papal persecutions and Protestant backsliding were still holding up the evangelical doctrines of the Lutheran Reformation, Wesley found great delight and no little sound instruction; especially in the sermons of the pastor of this flock, Christian David, and in the personal testimonies given at their social meetings. One after another these simple-minded men, wise only in the word of God, would declare what he had done for their souls, and by the substantial agreement of their experiences with his own Wesley was comforted and confirmed.

The determination of Wesley to go to the very depths of this matter of experimental religion, and his absolute abandonment of himself for that purpose, appears in an incident related of him during the few weeks' visit above mentioned. Like the Moravians themselves, he submitted to be governed by the Count and Bishop Zinzendorf, as well as to be instructed by the godly pastor Christian David, and the Count, with a view of testing his reverend pupil for spiritual pride, and to mortify it if any should be found, sent Wesley into the fields to dig like a common laborer. He meekly obeyed. After he had been at this work for awhile the Count came out and directed him to take his place in his carriage, as he was going to call upon a neighboring nobleman.

"Pray allow me to make my toilet," said Wesley.

"By no means," answered the Count; "it will help to mortify your spiritual pride to go as you are." And there was nothing to do but submit.

No wonder that Wesley, on his return from Herrnhut, was troubled with doubts about some of the fashions which prevailed even in that primitive community of Christian believers; though, on the whole, he says he would have been glad to spend his life among them.

During this absence in Germany his brother Charles was making himself very useful among the prisoners, and among the poor of London, as well as at the meetings of the societies. His Journal



abounds with cases of conversion, as if, having himself been born of God, he could hardly think of any other theme than regeneration by the Holy Ghost.

His eldest brother, the Rev. Samuel Wesley, was greatly offended at such doctrine, and opposed it, with all his might. To him it appeared absurd that a baptized and confirmed member of the Anglican communion, and a regularly ordained successor of the apostles withal, should state that he was not a Christian until after he had been "born again." Some of the Wesley sisters, however, sympathized with their "enthusiastic" brothers, John and Charles. In September his sister "Kizzy," as he calls her, a member of the Established Church in full communion, came to him and begged him with tears to pray for her; saying that she believed there was a depth of religion she had not yet fathomed, and "that she was not, but longed to be, converted."

Concerning this interview her brother Charles says: "I used Pascal's prayer for conversion over her." He evidently had not yet learned to pray without a book. His elder brother, John, had now over-passed this ceremonial stage of religion, as appears from the following entry in his Journal, in April, 1739: "Being at Mr. Fox's Society, my heart was so full that I could not confine myself to the forms of prayer which we were accustomed to use there. Neither do I purpose to be confined to them any more."

**Mrs. Wesley's Conversion.**—The mother of the Wesleys, having heard her son Samuel's account of what he regarded as the absurdities of his brethren, wrote a letter to them in which she took them to task for the wild extravagances that followed their preaching; but later on, being made personally acquainted with the progress of the work of God under their hands, she changed her criticisms for commendations, and afterward herself entered into the same blessed experience of saving grace.

The following, from John Wesley's Journal, under date of Sept. 3, 1739, shows how defective were even the most evangelical teachings of the 17th and 18th centuries on the subject of experimental religion:—

"Monday, Sept. 3.—I talked largely with my mother, who told me that till a short time since she had scarce heard such a thing men-



tioned as the having forgiveness of sins now, or God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit: much less did she imagine that this was the common privilege of all true believers. 'Therefore,' said she, 'I never durst ask for it myself. But two or three weeks ago, while my son, Hall, was pronouncing those words, in delivering the cup to me, "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee," the words struck through my heart, and I knew God for Christ's sake had forgiven me all *my* sins.'

"I asked whether her father (Dr. Annesley) had not the same faith, and whether she had not heard him preach it to others. She answered he had it himself; and declared, a little before his death, that for more than forty years he had no darkness, no fear, no doubt at all of his being 'accepted in the Beloved.' But that, nevertheless, she did not remember to have heard him preach, no, not once, explicitly upon it: whence she supposed he also looked upon it as the peculiar blessing of a few; not as promised to all the people of God."

Several of the daughters are also mentioned in the Journal as being happily converted; and at last Samuel himself, shortly before his death, which occurred November 6, 1739, just as the Methodist revival was getting fairly under way, emerged from his cave of traditional darkness into the light of conscious salvation.







ELIZABETH FRY.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE GOSPEL IN WORD AND IN POWER.

**Prison Ministry.**—The churches being closed against them, the Wesleys were glad to gain an audience in the prisons. Both the brothers were often found in the cells of the men about to die, and to them it was an especial cause of joy to find that Christ was “able to save unto the uttermost” all who came unto God by him, though in their more promiscuous prison services they must have sometimes been almost at their wits’ end what to do with their rough and vicious auditors.

Here are some extracts from the Journal of Charles Wesley, relating to this sorrowful but successful ministry:—

“July 12th. I preached at Newgate to the condemned felons, and visited one of them in his cell, sick of a fever: a poor black, that had robbed his master. I told him of One who came down from heaven to save lost sinners, and him in particular; described the sufferings of the Son of God, his sorrows, agony, and death. He listened with all the signs of eager astonishment. The tears trickled down his cheeks while he cried, ‘What! was it for me?’”





A NEWGATE CONGREGATION.

The portrait of the youthful preacher is from Jackson's famous group, "Wesley and his Friends at Oxford."



"July 15th. Rejoiced with my poor, happy black, now believing the Son of God loved him and gave himself for him."

"July 18th. At night I was locked in with Bray, in one of the cells. We wrestled in mighty prayer. All the criminals were present, and all delightfully cheerful. Joy was visible in all their faces."

"July 19th. By half past ten we came to Tyburn. Then were brought the children appointed to die. We had prayed before that our Lord would show there was a power superior to the fear of death. They were all cheerful, full of comfort, peace, and triumph, assuredly persuaded Christ had died for them, and waited to receive them into



A MODERN PRISON CHAPEL.

paradise. None showed any natural terror of death: no fear, or crying, or tears. I never saw such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. . . . I could do nothing but rejoice: kissed Hudson and Newington: took leave of each in particular. Exactly at twelve they were turned off. When the cart drew off not one stirred or struggled for life, but meekly gave up their spirits. That hour under the gallows was the most blessed hour of my life."

The notion of condemned felons going to paradise by way of Newgate and Tyburn was not at all agreeable to the high notions of the



London clergy. Their idea of religion was more respectable: salvation was for well-bred people, who went regularly to Church. It does not seem to have entered their minds but that Jesus Christ came to call the righteous, or that the first trophy of his victory over death and hell was a condemned felon who was executed by his side. If a sinner were to be saved by his respectability, the communion of the Established Church was an excellent place for the process: but the Wesleys and Whitefield declared that salvation was by faith alone; whereby the high privileges of wealth, education, and station, as well as the high prerogatives of the clergy, who claimed the monopoly of sacramental grace, were all ignored and trampled on. It was too common, too easy, too low: any body might be a Christian and go to paradise on such terms; and what then would become of the Established religion and the apostolic clergy? No wonder these Methodists were shut out of the churches; yet this worked together for good, since it was through this dark passage that God brought them out into broader, clearer light, and, under the blue dome of his own cathedral, set them preaching to thousands upon thousands in the open fields.

**Societies and Bands.**—It will be remembered that Mrs. Wesley named her assembly at the Epworth rectory a "Society:" a name that has held a prominent place in Methodist history, and which is still in use by British Wesleyans to designate an organized congregation, which they modestly refrain from calling a "Church."

It was also at the meetings of what the Moravians called "Societies" that Wesley caught the idea of using the testimony of converted persons concerning their experience of salvation, to supply, in some measure, the lack of service on the part of the ministry. There were but very few clergy in England who could take care of a company of young converts, or carry on the work of bringing others to a saving knowledge of Christ: and as the revival of spiritual religion began to spread, it became necessary to set these little companies thus to take care of, and edify, one another, while the Moravian "Societies" in London afforded him and his friends that religious fellowship which he could not find in his own communion on account of his "extravagance" and "enthusiasm."

Those little confidential companies of Moravians at Herrnhut, who used to meet every week and turn their hearts inside out, in order to



receive counsel from, or give encouragement to, their brethren, greatly interested him, and for some time after his return from Germany he appears as a leader in the "Societies" at Fetter Lane, Bear Yard, Gutter Lane, and at the Society in Aldersgate-street, so memorable as the place of his conversion.

What were these Societies?

Some of them were companies of United Brethren, gathered by the Moravian missionaries; others were the remnants of certain religious assemblies of people belonging to the Established Church which had been organized during a notable revival in London in 1699. It may have been from these London Societies that Mrs. Wesley borrowed the name of her meeting in the Epworth rectory.

One of these "Societies" was organized by the Wesleys themselves before the visit of John to Herrnhut, and so great was its success that it was able to erect a chapel in Fetter Lane, London, from which it was called the Fetter Lane Society. This continued to be the head-quarters of the Methodist movement until Wesley's secession therefrom, as will presently appear. The following extract from Wesley's Journal will indicate the nature and purpose of these "Societies," and also of the smaller "bands" into which the Society was divided:—

In obedience to the command of God by St. James, and by the advice of Peter Böhler, it is agreed by us,

1. That we will meet together once a week to "confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed."

2. That the persons so meeting be divided into several *bands*, or little companies, none of them consisting of fewer than five, or more than ten, persons.

3. That every one in order speak as freely, plainly, and concisely as he can, the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances, since the last time of meeting.

4. That all the bands have a conference at eight every Wednesday evening, begun and ended with singing and prayer.

5. That any who desire to be admitted into this Society be asked, "What are your reasons for desiring this? Will you be entirely open, using no kind of reserve? Have you any objection to any of our orders?" (which may then be read.)

6. That when any new member is proposed, every one present speak clearly and freely whatever objection he has to him.

7. That those against whom no reasonable objection appears be, in order for



their trial, formed into one or more distinct bands, and some person agreed on to assist them.

8. That after two months' trial, if no objection then appear, they may be admitted into the Society.

9. That every fourth Saturday be observed as a day of general intercession.

10. That on the Sunday seven-night following be a general love-feast, from seven till ten in the evening.

11. That no particular member be allowed to act in any thing contrary to any order of the Society: and that if any persons, after being thrice admonished, do not conform thereto, they be not any longer esteemed as members.

There were "Societies" of this kind in Bristol and elsewhere, and it was in connection with the Bristol Societies that the Methodist revival began in that portion of the kingdom.

**Whitefield's Return from America.**—Near the end of the year 1738 Whitefield and Wesley's old friend and pupil, Delamotte, returned from Georgia. As yet Mr. Whitefield had only taken deacon's orders, and must needs return to England to be ordained a priest: besides, he was desirous of establishing an orphanage at Savannah, after the manner of the famous institution of Professor Francke, in Germany, and for this he must resume his course of charity sermons among his English friends and admirers. But he found the churches were closed against him, as well as against his friends, the Wesleys, and he was glad to be received by the "Societies," which, under their labors, were fast becoming a power in the British capital.

**Power Accompanies the Word.**—It sometimes appears to be the purpose of God to break into the minds and consciences of men with signs and wonders, when they refuse admittance to his Gospel in any other way. These signs and wonders are so many exclamation points to catch the eye of heedless sinners. The attention of the eye is more quickly caught than that of the ear; people will go by thousands to see a prodigy, who would not be called out by the simple preaching of the Gospel; thus, through their curiosity, God makes a way into their minds for his truth, and thereby his kingdom is extended. Miracles and marvels are thus doubly useful, first as testimony to the truth of the word which they accompany, and second, as a strong attraction to bring the multitude within the circle of its power.



The strange scenes which often accompanied the early services of the Methodists in England are plentifully mentioned in Mr. Wesley's Journal. He claims them as evidence that God is with him, and defends himself from the storm of abuse which he encountered on account of them by boldly declaring their supernatural or subternatural character. The Lord and the devil, he was quite sure, both



INTERIOR OF FETTER LANE CHAPEL, 1827.

took there striking methods of showing their interest in the Methodist revival. But let Wesley himself speak :—

"Thursday, Nov. 25, 1738. While I was preaching at Newgate on these words, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life,' I was insensibly led, without any previous design, to declare strongly and explicitly that God willeth 'all men to be' thus 'saved;' and to pray that, 'if this were not the truth of God, he would not suffer the blind to go out of the way; but, if it were, he would bear witness to his word.' Immediately one, and another, and another, sunk to the



earth: they dropped on every side as thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud. We besought God in her behalf, and he turned her heaviness into joy. A second being in the same agony, we called upon God for her also; and he spoke peace unto her soul. In the evening I was again pressed in spirit to declare that 'Christ gave himself a ransom for all.' And almost before we called upon him to set to his seal, he answered. One was so wounded by the sword of the Spirit that you would have imagined she could not live a moment. But immediately his abundant kindness was showed, and she loudly sung of his righteousness."

"Friday, 26. All Newgate rang with the cries of those whom the word of God cut to the heart. Two of whom were in a moment filled with joy, to the astonishment of those that beheld them."

Again he writes: "While I was declaring that Jesus Christ had 'given himself a ransom for all,' three persons, almost at once, sunk down as dead, having all their sins set in array before them. But in a short time they were raised up, and knew that 'the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world' had taken away their sins."

Still again: "One who had been a zealous opposer of 'this way' sent and desired to speak with me immediately. He had all the signs of settled despair both in his countenance and behavior. He said he had been enslaved to sin many years, especially to drunkenness; that he had long used all the means of grace, had constantly gone to church and sacrament, had read the Scripture, and used much private prayer, and yet was nothing profited. I desired we might join in prayer. After a short space he rose, and his countenance was no longer sad. He said, 'Now I know God loveth *me*, and has forgiven *my* sins. And sin shall not have dominion over me; for Christ hath set me free.' And according to his faith it was unto him."

"April 17, 1739. At Baldwin-street [one of the Societies in Bristol] we called upon God to confirm his word. Immediately, one that stood by cried out aloud, with the utmost vehemence, even as in the agonies of death. But we continued in prayer till a new song was put into her mouth, a thanksgiving unto our God. Soon after, two other persons were seized with strong pain, and constrained to roar for the disquietude of their heart. But it was not long before they likewise burst forth into praise to God their Saviour. The last who



called upon God, as out of the belly of hell, was a stranger in Bristol; and in a short space he also was overwhelmed with joy and love, knowing that God had healed his backslidings."

"April 21. At Weavers' Hall, [another Bristol 'Society,'] a young man was suddenly seized with a violent trembling all over, and in a few minutes sunk to the ground. But we ceased not calling upon God till he raised him up full of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

"April 24. At Baldwin-street a young man, after a sharp though short agony, both of body and mind, found his soul filled with peace, knowing in whom he had believed."

"I did not mention J——n H——n, a weaver, who was at Baldwin-street the night before. He was (I understood) a man of a regular life and conversation, one that constantly attended the public prayers and sacrament, and was zealous for the Church, and against Dissenters of every denomination. Being informed that people fell into strange fits at the Societies, he came to see and judge for himself. But he was less satisfied than before; insomuch that he went about to his acquaintance, one after another, till one in the morning, and labored above measure to convince them it was a delusion of the devil. We were going home, when one met us in the street, and informed us that J——n H——n was fallen raving mad. It seems he had sat down to dinner, but had a mind first to end a sermon he had borrowed on 'Salvation by Faith.' In reading the last page he changed color, fell off his chair, and began screaming terribly, and beating himself against the ground. The neighbors were alarmed, and flocked together to the house. Between one and two I came in, and found him on the floor, the room being full of people, whom his wife would have kept without, but he cried aloud, 'No, let them all come; let all the world see the just judgment of God.' Two or three men were holding him as well as they could. He immediately fixed his eyes upon me, and, stretching out his hand, cried, 'Ay, this is he who I said was a deceiver of the people. But God has overtaken me. I said, It was all a delusion, but this is no delusion.' He then roared out, 'O thou devil! Thou cursed devil! Yea, thou legion of devils! Thou canst not stay. Christ will cast thee out. I know his work is begun. Tear me to pieces if thou wilt; but thou canst not hurt me.'



He then beat himself against the ground again; his breast heaving at the same time as in the pangs of death, and great drops of sweat trickling down his face. We all betook ourselves to prayer. His pangs ceased, and both his body and soul were set at liberty."

Sunday, May 20. "A young man sunk down as one dead; but soon began to roar out, and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him. His name was Thomas Maxfield. Except J——n II——n, I never saw one so torn of the evil one. Meanwhile many others began to cry out to the 'Saviour of all' that he would come and help them, insomuch that all the house (and indeed all the street for some space) was in an uproar. But we continued in prayer; and before ten the greater part found rest to their souls."

"I was called from supper to one who, feeling in herself such a conviction as she had never known before, had run out of the Society in all haste that she might not expose herself. But the hand of God followed her still; so that after going a few steps she was forced to be carried home; and when she was there, grew worse and worse. She was in a violent agony when we came. We called upon God, and her soul found rest. About twelve I was greatly importuned to go and visit one person more. She had only one struggle after I came, and was then filled with peace and joy. I think twenty-nine in all had their heaviness turned into joy this day."

"Friday, October 28. I met with a fresh proof that 'whatsoever ye ask, believing, ye shall receive.' A middle-aged woman desired me to return thanks for her to God, who, as many witnesses then present testified, was a day or two before really distracted, and as such tied down in her bed. But upon prayer made for her, she was instantly relieved, and restored to a sound mind."

In another place he says: "I began reading prayers, and preaching, in Gloucester-green Workhouse; and on Thursday, in that belonging to St. Thomas's parish. On both days I preached at the castle. At St. Thomas's was a young woman, raving mad, screaming and tormenting herself continually. I had a strong desire to speak to her. The moment I began she was still. The tears ran down her cheeks all the time I was telling her 'Jesus of Nazareth is able and willing to deliver you.' O where is faith upon earth? Why are these poor wretches left under the open bondage of Satan? Jesus, Master!



Give thou medicine to heal their sickness; and deliver those who are now also vexed with unclean spirits!"

"Tuesday, Oct. 23, 1739. At eleven I preached at Bearfield to about three thousand, on nature, bondage, and adoption. Returning in the evening, I was exceedingly pressed to go back to a young woman in Kingswood. (The fact I nakedly relate, and leave every man to his own judgment of it.) I went. She was nineteen or twenty years old; but, it seems, could not write or read. I found her on the bed, two or three persons holding her: It was a terrible sight. Anguish, horror, and despair, above all description, appeared in her pale face. The thousand distortions of her whole body showed how the dogs of hell were gnawing her heart. The shrieks intermixed were scarce to be endured. But her stony eyes could not weep. She screamed out, as soon as words could find their way, 'I am damned, damned; lost forever. Six days ago you might have helped me. But it is past. I am the devil's now. I have given myself to him. His I am. Him I must serve. With him I must go to hell. I cannot be saved. I will not be saved. I must, I will, I will be damned.' She then began praying to the devil. We began, 'Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!' She immediately sunk down as asleep; but, as soon as we left off, broke out again, with inexpressible vehemence, 'Stony hearts, break! I am a warning to you. I am damned, that you may be saved.' She then fixed her eyes on the corner of the ceiling, and said, 'There he is; ay, there he is; come, good devil, come. Take me away. I am yours. Come just now. Take me away.' We interrupted her by calling again upon God: on which she sunk down as before; and another young woman began to roar out as loud as she had done. My brother now came in, it being about nine o'clock. We continued in prayer till past eleven, when God in a moment spoke peace into the soul, first of the first tormented, and then of the other. And they both joined in singing praise to Him who had 'stilled the enemy and the avenger.'"

"Wednesday, 24. I preached at Baptist Mills on those words of St. Paul, speaking in the person of one 'under the law,' (that is, still 'carnal, and sold under sin,' though groaning for deliverance,) 'I know that in me dwelleth no good thing.' A poor woman told me afterward, 'I does hope as my husband wont hinder me any more.



For I minded he did shiver every bone of him, and the tears ran down his cheeks like the rain.’”

It would be easy to make a whole chapter of such cases, but these will serve to show the power which accompanied the word as preached by the leader of the Methodists, and which afterward gave similar testimony to the truth under the ministry of the first Methodists in America. Nor were these marvels found among Methodists alone. The very same superhuman influences are mentioned in the history of the great revival, which began at about the same time, at Northampton, in Massachusetts, under the ministry of that famous Congregationalist divine, Dr. Jonathan Edwards.\* The same agonies and ecstasies are also mentioned in connection with other great historic revivals of religion, and it is to be regretted that so many good people who have felt themselves called upon to denounce these “extravagancies” should have overlooked the book of the Acts of the Apostles, whose records, if carefully studied, would have given them a more intelligent, as well as a more orthodox view of the case.

\* The revival which commenced at Northampton spread throughout the greater part of the colony. All sorts of people—high and low, rich and poor, wise and unwise, moral and immoral—simultaneously became the subjects of the Spirit’s strivings, and were converted. This remarkable movement took place only a few months before Wesley set sail for Georgia, and continued for several years afterward. Mr. Edwards published a narrative of its most striking incidents, in which he says:—

In many instances conviction of sin and conversion were attended with intense physical excitement. Numbers fell prostrate on the ground, and cried aloud for mercy. The bodies of others were convulsed and benumbed. As chaos preceded creation, so in New England confusion went before conversion. The work was great and glorious, but was accompanied with noise and tumult. Men literally *cried* for mercy; but the loudest outcries were not so loud as the shrieks of Voltaire or Volney, when the prospect of eternity unnerved them. Stout-hearted sinners trembled; but not more than philosophers of the present day would do if they had equally vivid views of the torments of the damned to which sin exposes them. There were groanings and faintings; transports and ecstasies; zeal sometimes more fervid than discreet; and passion not unfrequently more powerful than pious; but, from one end of the land to the other, multitudes of vain, thoughtless sinners were unmistakably converted, and were made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Frolicking, night-walking, singing lewd songs, tavern-haunting, profane speaking, and extravagance in dress, were generally abandoned. The talk of the people was about the favor of God, an interest in Christ, a sanctified heart, and spiritual blessedness here and hereafter. The country was full of meetings of persons of all sorts and ages, to read, pray, and sing praises. Oftentimes the people were wrought up into the highest transports of love, joy, and admiration, and had such views of the divine perfections and the excellencies of Christ, that for five or six hours together their souls reposed in a kind of sacred elysium, until the body seemed to sink beneath the weight of divine discoveries, and nature was deprived of all ability to stand or speak.—*Tyerman’s Life and Times of Wesley.*



In one of his replies to a clerical opponent, in May, 1739, Mr. Wesley says:—

“The question between us turns chiefly, if not wholly, on matter of fact. You deny that God does now work these effects: at least, that he works them in this manner. I affirm both; because I have heard these things with my own ears, and have seen them with my eyes. I have seen (as far as a thing of this kind can be seen) very many persons changed in a moment from the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the spirit of love, joy, and peace; and from sinful desire, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. These are matters of fact, whereof I have been, and almost daily am, an eye or ear witness. What I have to say touching visions or dreams, is this: I know several persons in whom this great change was wrought in a dream, or during a strong representation to the eye of their mind, of Christ either on the cross, or in glory. This is the fact; let any judge of it as they please. And that such a change was then wrought appears (not from their shedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out: these are not the fruits, as you seem to suppose, whereby I judge, but) from the whole tenor of their life, till then many ways wicked; from that time, holy, just, and good.

“I will show you him who was a lion till then, and is now a lamb; him that was a drunkard, and is now exemplarily sober; the whore-monger that was, who now abhors the very ‘garment spotted by the flesh.’ These are my living arguments for what I assert, namely, ‘That God does now, as aforetime, give remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, even to us and to our children; yea, and that always suddenly, as far as I have known, and often in dreams or in the visions of God.’ If it be not so, I am found a false witness before God. For these things I *do*, and by his grace *will*, testify.”

And further, on this point, he writes in his Journal:—

“Perhaps it might be because of the hardness of our hearts, unready to receive any thing unless we see it with our eyes and hear it with our ears, that God, in tender condescension to our weakness, suffered so many outward signs of the very time when he wrought this inward change to be continually seen and heard among us. But although they saw “signs and wonders,” (for so I must term them,) yet many would not believe. They could not indeed *deny* the facts:



but they could *explain* them away. Some said, 'These were purely *natural* effects; the people fainted away only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms.' And others were 'sure it was all a cheat: they might help it if they would. Else why were these things only in their private societies: why were they not done in the face of the sun?'

"To-day our Lord answered for himself. For while I was enforcing these words, 'Be still, and know that I am God,' he began to make bare his arm, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One, and another, and another was struck to the earth; exceedingly trembling at the presence of his power. Others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, 'What must we do to be saved?' And in less than an hour seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that time, were rejoicing, and singing, and with all their might giving thanks to the God of their salvation."

Concerning these singular bodily exercises already mentioned, the Rev. Ralph Erskine wrote to Wesley thus: "Some of the instances you give seem to be exemplified, in the outward manner, by the cases of Paul and the jailer, as also Peter's hearers, (Acts ii.) The last instance you give of some struggling as in the agonies of death is to me somewhat more inexplicable, if it do not resemble the child of whom it is said, that 'when he was yet a-coming, the devil threw him down and tare him.' I make no question, Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to mar and hinder the beginning of the good work, in the persons that are touched with the sharp arrows of conviction; and partly, also, to prevent the *success* of the Gospel on others. However, the merciful issue of these conflicts, in the conversion of the persons thus affected, is the main thing."

Erskine also mentions that they have something in Scotland analogous to what had occurred in Bristol. Sometimes, he says, a whole congregation, in a flood of tears, would cry out at once, so as to drown the voice of the minister.

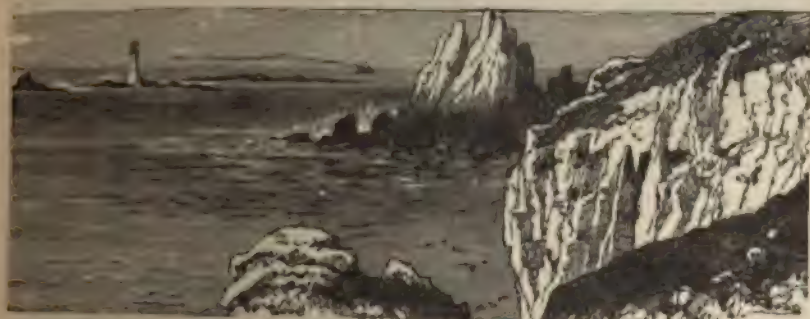
The Rev. Richard Watson writes upon this point:—

"That cases of real enthusiasm occurred at this and subsequent periods, is indeed allowed. There are always nervous, dreamy, and



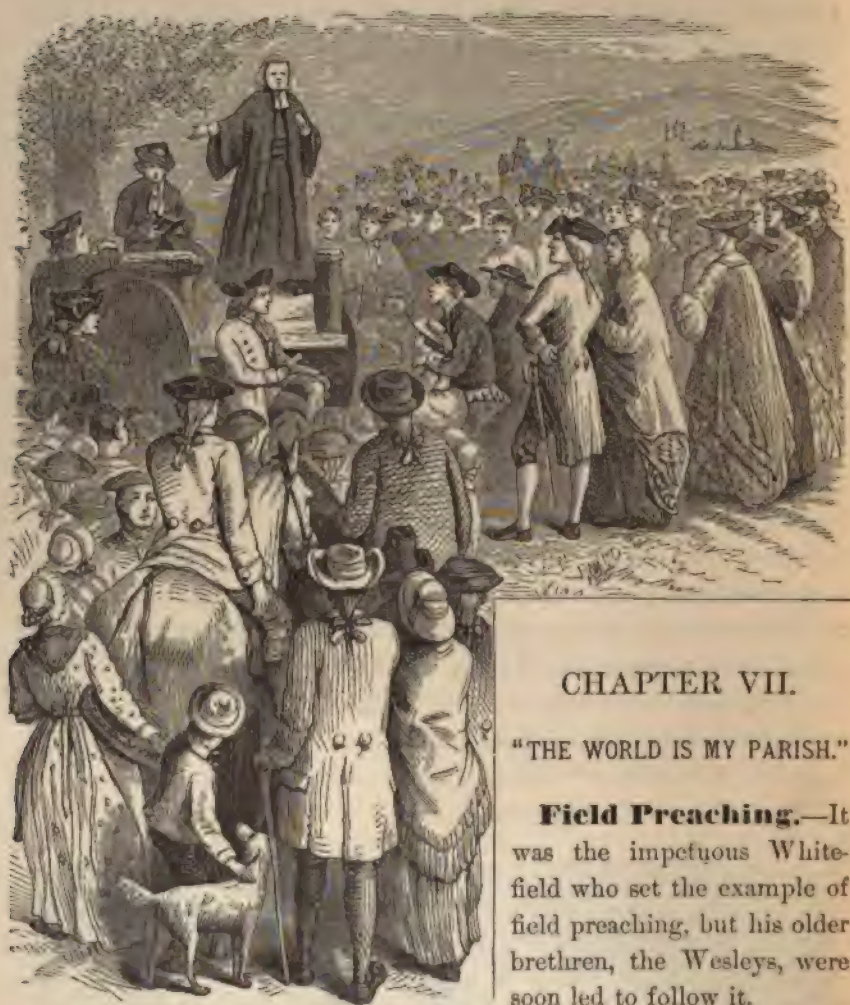
excitable people to be found; and the emotion produced among these would often be communicated by natural sympathy. No one could be blamed for this unless he had encouraged the excitement for its own sake, or taught the people to regard it as a sign of grace, which most assuredly Mr. Wesley never did. Nor is it correct to represent these effects, genuine and fictitious together, as peculiar to Methodism. Great and rapid results were produced in the first ages of Christianity, but not without 'outcries,' and strong corporeal as well as mental emotions. Like effects often accompanied the preaching of eminent men at the Reformation; and many of the Puritans and Non-conformist ministers had similar successes in our own country. In Scotland, and also among the grave Presbyterians of New England, previous to the rise of Methodism, the ministry of faithful men had been attended by very similar circumstances."

Besides these "bodily exercises," there were about this time two or three triumphant deaths among the Methodist converts, whose dying testimonies added further confirmation of the blessed truth of regeneration through faith in Jesus Christ: and these and other such experiences, wrought into hymns by Charles Wesley, the poet of the great revival, then began to cheer the souls of believers with songs which were destined to be heard and echoed all around the world.



SOUTH COAST OF ENGLAND.





## CHAPTER VII.

"THE WORLD IS MY PARISH."

**Field Preaching.**—It was the impetuous Whitefield who set the example of field preaching, but his older brethren, the Wesleys, were soon led to follow it.

Whitefield, now returned from his first visit to America, had been ordained as a priest by his old friend Bishop Benson, who says of him: "Though mistaken on some points, I think Mr. Whitefield a very pious, well-meaning young man, with good abilities and great zeal." Going to Georgia had not cured him of any of his "enthusiasm," or shorn him of any of his strength. Again the churches from which he was not shut out were overwhelmed with people, thousands of whom were glad to hear, even from the church-yard, the wonderful preacher whom they could not approach near enough to



see, and they found the preaching to be the same doctrine over again: Regeneration by the Holy Ghost; and the same practical outcome: conversion of sinners, and collections for the Georgia mission.

At Bristol, the scene of his great success the year before, he was now denied the use of the churches, and was obliged to content himself with a sermon on "The Penitent Thief" to the prisoners in Newgate; but even here he did not omit the collection, which, on this occasion, he tells us, amounted to fifteen shillings. Here, also, the State-church authorities pursued him, and at their instance the mayor and magistrates commanded the jailer not to allow him to preach again in the prison, giving as a reason that "he insisted upon the necessity of being born again."

What harm it could possibly do the Newgate prisoners to be born again the magistrate did not say; the point to be gained was, to silence this too faithful, too orthodox, too evangelical preacher. But the Gospel was in him as a fire shut up in his bones. He was sent to preach: God had called him to do that work in his boyhood: for it he had been ordained both deacon and priest: sinners needing new hearts were terribly plenty: and, besides, there was his Orphan House to be built in Georgia: therefore, he must preach: heaven and earth demanded it.

**Bristol and Kingswood.**—There was a village of colliers at Kingswood, near Bristol, a people whom he already knew to be almost in a state of barbarism, and on whom nothing was so likely to take saving effect as his favorite doctrine of regeneration. They were evidently too far gone in sin to be repaired; any work that could reach their case must include a new nature and begin with a new birth. Here on Sunday, February 17th, 1739, for the first time in England, George Whitefield preached in the open air. His congregation was made up of about two hundred of the Kingswood colliers, and of his experience in this connection he writes: "I believe I was never more acceptable to my Master than when I was standing to teach these hearers in the open fields."

On the 4th of March following he preached again in the open air at a place called Baptist Mills, to a congregation of three or four thousand people. The sight of this great throng elated him: "Blessed be God!" says he, "all things happen for the furtherance of the Gospel:



I now preach to ten times as many people as I should if I had been confined to the churches. Surely the devil is blind; so are his emissaries, or they would not so confound themselves."

The State-church of England was a part of the machinery of the Government. The Church was the instrument of the State. The means of grace were matters for which Englishmen might be taxed. The regular clergy held their places by act of Parliament as well as by personal and political favor; they were therefore manageable. But the people called "Methodists," who were now becoming so numerous and so troublesome, were not disposed to submit to the political monopoly of religion claimed by the clergy and magistrates; and as for Whitefield, while he desired to do nothing contrary to his ordination vows in the Establishment, he could by no means refuse to heed the call of the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, by whom he was appointed a preacher of righteousness. The churches were the property of the Establishment, but the out-of-doors belonged to the Lord; therefore when Whitefield found himself shut out of the Church of England, he straightway adjourned his services to the church of God.

It was a bold thing to do, but Whitefield does not seem to have been conscious of any great courage in the matter. He was already somewhat calloused by the abuse of his enemies, and to be called bad names by them did him little harm. On one occasion, at Coal-pit Heath, in the neighborhood of Bristol, while he was preaching to a congregation of many thousands, a "gentleman" who was drunk interrupted him, called him a "dog," declared that he ought to be "whipped at the cart's tail"—which was one of the modes of punishment in that day—and offered money to any one who would pelt him with mud and stones; but the colliers were the friends of the preacher, and instead of pelting him they pelted his adversary until the overzealous "gentleman" was glad to make his escape and leave the Methodist to go on with his sermon.

At Hannam Mount he preached to four or five thousand people, of which service he writes:—

"The sun shone very bright, and the people, standing in such an awful manner around the mount in the profoundest silence, filled me with holy admiration."

Two days later he estimates his congregation at ten thousand, but



the voice of the preacher was so loud and clear that it could be distinctly heard by every one in the vast assembly. At Rose Green, in Kingswood, his congregation covered three acres, and was computed at twenty thousand souls, upon which he exclaims: "The fire is kindled in the country, and all the devils in hell shall not be able to quench it." Among these crowds of poor people Whitefield collected about two hundred pounds for his Georgia orphanage, much of it with his own hands, in his own hat, which latter was sometimes almost filled with half-pence, and the carrying of such a weight through such a crowd caused him to complain of the lameness of his arms.

Besides his public ministrations he gave personal instruction to inquirers in the divine mysteries of faith and regeneration: he was also teaching his brother Methodists how to carry on their work without any just cause of offense to the rich and the mighty, and in a way by which, without the help of their money or their influence, the Gospel could be preached to the ignorant and the poor. Out-door preaching was not forbidden by the Prayer Book, though not contemplated by the men who made it. Such services were, indeed, irregular, but no one could say they were unlawful. On several previous occasions, after preaching a charity sermon by special request in some Church, Whitefield had felt himself impelled to go out and preach in the church-yard to the larger congregation which awaited him there, and this new departure had already developed in him a larger freedom of manner than was fashionable at that time. When, therefore, he took to field preaching he easily broke away from the stiffness which prevailed within church walls, and began at once to strike out boldly and freely to reach the hearts of the people, multitudes of whom would never have heard the word of life if Whitefield and his brother Methodists had not brought it out of the Church to them in the woods and fields. It was the miracle of feeding the five thousand over again. That was an out-of-door service, too, and was doubtless intended to be prophetic as well as humane.

**Wesley Takes to the Fields.**—It was now necessary for Mr. Whitefield to leave the neighborhood of Bristol, but he could not bear the thought of leaving this great flock to be scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd, therefore he wrote to his friend John Wesley at London to come down to Bristol and carry on the work which



he had begun ; and, much to the grief of the London Societies, among whom Wesley had come to be a spiritual leader, as well as much against the prejudices of his brother Charles, who was shocked at the idea of any thing so irregular as an out-of-door service, he consented to make trial of this new method of work. But first the call was made a subject of special prayer by the brethren, after which the matter was submitted to the "test by lot," a common practice among the Moravians, and the lot decided that he should go.

Charles Wesley appears not to have been satisfied with the knowledge of the divine will obtained in this manner, and submitted the case to the further test of "opening the book;" whereupon, the book being placed upon its back and allowed to fall open, the first text which caught his eye was, "Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, yet thou shalt not groan nor weep." Thus to all appearances it was the will of God that John Wesley should go down to Bristol, at which place he arrived on Saturday, the 31st of April, 1739. He would have gone to the ends of the earth on the strength of such a call.

Of his first service in Bristol Mr. Wesley writes:—

"Saturday, 31. In the evening I reached Bristol, and met Mr. Whitefield there. I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."

"April 1, 1739. In the evening (Mr. Whitefield being gone) I began expounding our Lord's sermon on the mount (one pretty remarkable precedent of field preaching, though I suppose there were churches at that time also) to a little society which was accustomed to meet once or twice a week in Nicholas-street."

"Monday, 2. At four in the afternoon I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people. The Scripture on which I spoke was this, (is it possible any one should be ignorant, that it is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ?) 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He



hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted ; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind : to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'"

**"The World is My Parish."**—This utterance of Mr. Wesley, which is perhaps more quoted than any other of his sayings, marks the long step in advance which he took when he began to preach in the fields. As a Churchman he was forbidden to preach in the parish of any clergyman without his consent ; but Wesley understood the jurisdiction of the local minister to be confined to the church and those premises which properly belonged thereto ; but that it should extend to all the commons, fields, and forests, he could not for a moment allow. When he was questioned as to his good faith in holding out-of-door services without the consent of the local clergy, he replied :—

"You ask, 'How is it that I assemble Christians who are none of my charge, to sing psalms, and pray, and hear the Scriptures expounded? and think it hard to justify doing this in other men's parishes, upon catholic principles.'

"Permit me to speak plainly. If by catholic principles you mean any other than scriptural, they weigh nothing with me : I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures : but on scriptural principles I do not think it hard to justify whatever I do. God in Scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this in another's parish ; that is, in effect, to do it at all, seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom, then, shall I hear, God or man? 'If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge you.' 'A dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me ; and woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.' But where shall I preach it upon the principles you mention? Why, not in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America ; not in any of the Christian parts, at least, of the habitable earth. For all these are, after a sort, divided into parishes. If it be said, 'Go back, then, to the heathens from whence you came : ' nay, but neither could I now (on your principles) preach to them : for all the heathens in Georgia belong to the parish either of Savannah or Frederica.

"Suffer me now to tell you my principles in this matter. I look



upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to; and sure I am that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I, therefore, to be faithful in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed according to the plain direction of his word, 'as I have opportunity, doing good unto all men:' and his providence clearly concurs with his word, which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, 'and go about doing good.'"

**The Kingswood School.\***—One of the first thoughts of the converted colliers at Kingswood was the need of Christian education for their children, and Mr. Whitefield, at his farewell service, April 2, 1739, laid the corner-stone of a school; but the plans and the corner-stone comprised the chief assets of the enterprise when it fell into the hands of Mr. Wesley, who succeeded Whitefield in the care of the Kingswood mission. The following account of the work of grace among this benighted people, from Mr. Wesley's Journal, gives a vivid picture of the life of a great class of persons in the England of that day; a population numbering hundreds of thousands, and scattered all over the mining districts of the kingdom:—

"Few persons have lived long in the west of England who have not heard of the colliers of Kingswood; a people famous, from the beginning hitherto, for neither fearing God nor regarding man: so ignorant of the things of God that they seemed but one remove from the beasts that perish; and, therefore, utterly without desire of instruction, as well as without the means of it.

"Many last winter used tauntingly to say of Mr. Whitefield, 'If he will convert heathens, why does not he go to the colliers of Kingswood?' In spring he did so. And as there were thousands who

\* Kingswood was formerly a royal chase, containing between three and four thousand acres; but previous to the rise of Methodism it had been gradually appropriated by the several lords whose estates encircled it. The deer had disappeared, and the greater part of the wood also. Coal mines had been discovered, and it was now inhabited by a race of people as lawless as the foresters, their forefathers, but far more brutal; and differing as much from the people of the surrounding country in dialect as in appearance. They had no place of worship, for Kingswood then belonged to the parish of St. Philip, and was at least three miles distant from the parish church.



resorted to no place of public worship, he went after them into their own wilderness, 'to seek and save that which was lost.' When he was called away others went into 'the highways and hedges to compel them to come in.' And by the grace of God their labor was not in vain. The scene is already changed. Kingswood does not now, as a year ago, resound with cursing and blasphemy. It is no more filled with drunkenness and uncleanness, and the idle diversions that naturally lead thereto. It is no longer full of wars and fightings, of clamor and bitterness, of wrath and envyings. Peace and love are there. Great numbers of the people are mild, gentle, and easy to be entreated.



NEW KINGSWOOD SCHOOL.

They 'do not cry, neither strive,' and hardly is their 'voice heard in the streets;' or, indeed, in their own wood, unless when they are at their usual evening diversion, singing praise unto God their Saviour.

"That their children, too, might know the things which make for their peace, it was some time since proposed to build a house in Kingswood; and after many foreseen and unforeseen difficulties, in June last the foundation was laid. The ground made choice of was in the middle of the wood, between the London and Bath roads, not far



from that called Two-Mile Hill, about three measured miles from Bristol.

"Here a large room was begun for the school, having four small rooms at either end for the school-masters (and perhaps, if it should please God, some poor children) to lodge in. Two persons are ready to teach so soon as the house is fit to receive them, the shell of which is nearly finished; so that it is hoped the whole will be completed in spring, or early in the summer."

Such was the beginning of that famous institution which for many years has been one of the chief training schools of the English Methodist preachers; its doors being now open only for the sons of Wesleyan ministers in active service.

Wesley spent the remainder of the year 1739 at Bristol and vicinity, where, in about nine months, he preached and expounded no less than five hundred times; all these services, with only eight exceptions, being held in the open air.

**Wesley and Beau Nash.**—The singular spectacle of a clergyman of the Church of England, in gown and bands, standing on a table, or in a cart, or on the stump of a tree in the open fields, surrounded by a multitude of unwashed, uncombed, uncultivated people, down whose smutty faces the tears had washed little places white, was something so wonderful as to attract the notice of the "higher classes," and accordingly, among the crowds were often seen the carriages of the nobility and gentry, to whom, however, the preacher was quite as plain and faithful as to the ruder portion of his audience, on which account he was regarded, in certain quarters, as a very rude and even dangerous person. How stupid of him not to be able to discern between sin in the rich and sin in the poor!

During a visit to the neighboring city of Bath, which was at that time the center of the English world of luxury, fashion, and leisure, a notorious rake and gambler called Beau Nash, who was the acknowledged leader in Bath society, attempted to break up one of Wesley's out-of-door meetings. Soon after the preacher had commenced his sermon the dandy appeared in gorgeous array, and impudently demanded—

"By what authority dare you do what you are doing now?"

"By the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by him who is



now Archbishop of Canterbury, when he laid his hands upon my head and said, 'Take thou authority to preach the Gospel,' " was Mr. Wesley's deliberate reply.

"But this is a conventicle," said Nash, "and contrary to act of Parliament."

"No," answered Wesley, "conventicles are seditious meetings, but here is no sedition; therefore it is not contrary to act of Parliament."

"I say it is," stormed the fellow; "and, besides, your preaching frightens people out of their wits."



WESLEY AND BEAU NASH.

"Sir," said Wesley, "did you ever hear me preach?"

"No."

"How can you judge of what you never heard?"

"I judge by common report."

"Is not your name Nash?" asked Wesley.

"It is," said the beau.

"Well, sir, I dare not judge *you* by common report," was Mr. Wesley's stinging reply.

The pretentious fop was confounded, especially when an old woman



in the congregation took part in the argument against him, and instead of breaking up the "conventicle," as he had boasted he would do, he was glad enough to sneak away and leave Wesley to finish his sermon.

**John Wesley and his Critics.**—The preaching of Wesley was of a much less florid and enthusiastic style than that of Whitefield, but the crowds that waited on him were equally large. In the plainest speech he talked the plainest theology, mixed with the most downright common sense, and the multitudes seemed to relish it quite as well as they did the brilliant rhetoric of his pupil; his word, also, was attended with greater spiritual power. Whitefield's sermons were always "collection sermons," while Wesley was wholly intent on teaching his hearers the lesson which he himself had so long been striving to learn, namely, how to save their souls. He also took frequent collections, it is true, but the financial feature was far less prominent under Wesley than it was under Whitefield.

If Wesley had held to his Holy Club notions, and simply taught the duties of religion, there would have been little or no complaint; but when he declared that without saving faith in Christ there was no salvation, even for the aristocracy and clergy, their indignation knew no bounds. One of his favorite texts was, "By grace are ye saved through faith," and he constantly insisted that it is the grace of God, and not their own efforts at goodness, which brings salvation within reach of any believer.

It was not long before both the pulpit and the press opened their guns upon him. He was denounced as "a restless deceiver of the people;" an "ignorant pretender;" a "new-fangled teacher, setting up his own fanatical conceits in opposition to the authority of God;" a "rapturous enthusiast;" a "Jesuit in disguise;" and, worst of all, "*a Dissenter*." "Every-where," says Wesley, "we were represented as 'mad dogs,' and treated accordingly. We were stoned in the streets, and several times narrowly escaped with our lives. In sermons, newspapers, and pamphlets of all kinds, we were painted as unheard-of monsters, but this moved us not; we went on testifying salvation by faith both to small and great, and not counting our lives dear unto ourselves so that we might finish our course with joy."

As a specimen of the churchly criticisms on John Wesley, this,



from a sermon by Rev. Joseph Drapp, a London Doctor of Divinity, will suffice. He accuses Wesley of "outraging common decency and common sense;" says his course is "so ridiculous as to create the greatest laughter, were it not so deplorable and detestable as to create the greatest grief and abhorrence, especially when vast multitudes are so sottish and wicked as in a tumultuous manner to run maddening after him. Go not after these impostors and seducers," he cries, "but shun them as you would the plague. I am ashamed to speak upon a subject which is a reproach, not only to our Church and country, but human nature itself. To the prevalence of immorality and profanity, infidelity and atheism, is now added the pest of enthusiasm."

This tirade he published in a pamphlet entitled "The Nature, Folly, Sin, and Danger of being Righteous Over Much; with a Particular View to the Doctrines and Practices of Certain Modern Enthusiasts." All this, and much more to the same purpose, because a plain-spoken young minister of the Establishment was preaching the plain Scripture doctrine of salvation by faith, and doing that preaching out of doors!

Whitefield, also, was treated to his full share of abuse, since his favorite doctrine of regeneration was no whit more acceptable to the English Pharisees than Wesley's teachings on salvation by faith. One Thomas Tucker, a young clergyman, in a bitter attack on Mr. Whitefield, accused him of "propagating blasphemies and enthusiastic notions which strike at the root of all religion, and make it the jest of those who sit in the seat of the scornful;" to which Wesley replied on Whitefield's behalf by advising Tucker not to meddle with controversy, since his talents were not equal to its management, and it would only entangle and bewilder him.

Charles Wesley and Ingham were also at work on the same lines, but for a time they appear to have escaped persecution under cover of the tumult which raged around the two chief apostles of the Methodist revival.

The next onslaught was much more authoritative and serious. In August, 1739, Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, published a "Pastoral Letter by way of Caution against Lukewarmness on the One Hand, and Enthusiasm on the Other," a large part of which was leveled against the Methodists, whom he accuses of claiming divine



inspiration in their preaching, and special divine direction in their personal affairs; forgetting, no doubt, that both these benedictions were promised to believers in the word of God. But the thing which troubled the Bishop the most was, the fact that the Methodists boasted of "sudden and surprising effects as wrought by the Holy Ghost in consequence of their preaching;" and that they endeavored "to justify their own extraordinary methods of teaching by casting unworthy reflections upon the parochial clergy, as deficient in the discharge of their duty, and not instructing their people in the true doctrines of Christianity."

To this "pastoral letter" Whitefield wrote an answer, in a firm but respectful tone, turning the tables upon the Bishop, and charging him with propagating a "new gospel;" quoting from the Bishop's writings the statement that "good works are a necessary condition of our being justified in the sight of God;" while Whitefield reasserted that faith is the only necessary condition of justification, and that good works are the necessary fruit and consequences of a saved condition of soul. "This," says Whitefield, "is the doctrine of Jesus Christ; this is the doctrine of the Church of England; and it is because the generality of the Church of England to-day fail to preach this doctrine that I am resolved, God being my helper, to continue, in season and out of season, to declare it unto all men, let the consequences as to my private person be what they will."

"The Methodists," says another critic, "are mad enthusiasts, who teach, for dictates of the Holy Spirit, seditions, heresies, and contempt of the ordinances of God and man. They are buffoons in religion, and mountebanks in theology; creatures who disclaim sense and are below argument."

This writer also accuses Whitefield of "behavior disgraceful to the Christian religion and to the ministerial office." "The clergy," says he, "have all refused him their pulpits, and the Lord-Mayor the halls and markets of the city. He is a conceited boaster and heterodox intruder, whose next performance may be accompanied with a chorus of ten thousand sighs and groans, deepened with bassoons." In view of the alarming progress of Methodism he makes his pitiful moan as follows:—

"In Yorkshire, by the preaching of the Methodists the spirit of



enthusiasm has so prevailed that almost every man who can hammer out a chapter in the Bible has turned an expounder of the Scripture, to the great decay of industry and the almost ruin of the woollen manufacture, which seems threatened with destruction for want of hands to work it. Methodism has laid aside play-books and poems for Scripture phrases and hymns of its own composing. Its disciples are never easy but when they are in a church or expounding the Bible, which they can do off-handed from Genesis to Revelation with great ease and power. They have given away their finery to tattered beggars, resolving to wear the coarsest attire and live upon the most ordinary diet. Several fine ladies, who used to wear French silks, French hoops four yards wide, bob-wigs, and white satin smock petticoats, are turned Methodists, and now wear stuff gowns!"

Alas, alas! What was to become of England if Methodism went on at such a rate? Still, we must not be unmindful of this sinister compliment to the Yorkshire Methodists for their extraordinary knowledge of the word of God. Such a talent for "expounding the Bible" "from Genesis to Revelation," with such "power and ease," ought to have mitigated the grief of this churchly man over such awful calamities as a fine lady turned Methodist, and her lamentable downfall from "white satin smock petticoats" to "stuff gowns."

One Penrue, a curate of the Establishment, declared that of his personal knowledge John Wesley was a Papist; but the Papists, for their part, denounced him; so there was an end to that slander.

Whether the attacks of the press and the pulpit were intended to excite the mob against the Methodists, it is impossible to say; but that these attacks were well calculated to that end cannot be denied. On one occasion a mob gathered from the worst purlieus in Bristol filled the streets and alleys near the place where Wesley was preaching, and also filled the air with a perfect din of shouts, groans, and curses; but it was remarked that within a fortnight one of the chief rioters hanged himself, and a second, being seized with serious illness, sent for Mr. Wesley to come and pray with him.

**Dr. Doddridge on the Methodists.**—There were, however, some godly men of high position who saw and felt the divine power which accompanied the new revival, and who bore brave testimony to the faithfulness and soundness of its leaders; as proof of



which take the following extract from a letter written by the Rev. Dr. Doddridge. Under the date of September 17, 1739, he writes concerning the two Wesleys, Whitefield, and Ingham:—



PHILIP DODDRIDGE.

"The common people flock to hear them, and in most places hear gladly. They commonly preach once or twice every day; and expound the Scriptures in the evening to religious societies, who have their society rooms for that purpose." He then proceeds to give an account of his hearing Charles Wesley preach at Bristol, standing on a table, in a field. "He then," continues Dr. Doddridge, "preached about an hour in such a manner as I scarce ever heard any man preach.

Though I have heard many a finer sermon, yet I think I never heard any man discover such evident signs of vehement desire." "With unusual fervor he acquitted himself as an ambassador for Christ; and although he used no notes, nor had any thing in his hand but a Bible, yet he delivered his thoughts in a rich, copious variety of expression, and with so much propriety that I could not observe any thing incoherent through the whole performance, which he concluded with singing, prayer, and the usual benediction."

Thus in various ways the Methodist revival was promoted, and its leaders vindicated and protected, both by the praise of godly men, and the powers of the upper world.

**The "New Room" and the "Old Foundry."**—The first Methodist house of worship was that erected by John Wesley at Bristol in 1739, for the accommodation of the Nicholas-street and Baldwin-street "Societies." It was not dignified by the name of "church" or even "chapel," but was simply called "The New Room."

More familiar to readers of Methodist history, however, is the first Methodist preaching-house in London. This was the famous



"Old Foundry," the purchase of which Mr. Wesley undertook on his own sole responsibility, and which, as the cradle of London Methodism, deserves a somewhat minute description.

In November, 1739, Mr. Wesley was invited by two gentlemen, who were strangers to him, to preach in an unused and dilapidated building in London near the Moorfields; where on Sunday, November 11th, he preached to two large congregations. In the morning, at eight o'clock, there were about five thousand, and at five in the evening, seven or eight thousand persons present. The place had formerly



THE OLD FOUNDRY.

been used as a government foundry for the casting of cannon, but somewhat more than twenty years before this a terrible explosion had occurred which blew off the roof and otherwise injured the building, killing and wounding a considerable number of workmen. This accident led to the abandonment of the Old Foundry and the removal of the works to Woolwich.

The purchase-money was £115; but the place being "a vast uncouth heap of ruins," a large sum additional to this had to be expended



in needful repairs. To meet this expenditure some friends lent him the purchase money ; and offered to pay subscriptions, some four, some six, and some ten shillings a year toward the liquidation of the debt. In three years these subscriptions amounted to about £480, leaving, however, a balance of nearly £300, for which Wesley was still responsible. From this it would seem that the entire cost of the Old Foundry was about £800.

It stood in the locality called "Windmill Hill," now known by the name of Windmill-street, a street that runs parallel with City Road, and abuts on the north-west corner of Finsbury Square. The building measured about forty yards in front, from north to south. There were two front doors, one leading to the chapel, and the other to the preacher's house, school, and bandroom. A bell was hung in a plain belfry, and was rung every morning at five o'clock for early service, and every evening at nine for family worship ; as well as at sundry other times. The chapel, which would accommodate some fifteen hundred people, was without pews ; but on the ground floor, immediately before the pulpit, were about a dozen seats with back rails, appropriated to female worshipers. Under the front gallery were the free seats for women ; and under the side galleries, the free seats for men. The front gallery was used exclusively by females, and the side galleries by males. "From the beginning," says Wesley, "the men and women sat apart, as they always did in the primitive Church ; and none were suffered to call any place their own, but the first comers sat down first. They had no pews ; and all the benches for rich and poor were of the same construction." \*

The bandroom was behind the chapel, on the ground floor, some eighty feet long and twenty feet wide, and accommodated about three hundred persons. Here the classes met ; here, in winter, the five o'clock morning service was conducted ; and here were held, at two o'clock on Wednesdays and Fridays, weekly meetings for prayer and intercession. The north end of the room was used for a school, and was fitted up with desks ; and at the south end was "The Book Room," for the sale of Wesley's publications.

\* Wesley's arrangements for the Foundry congregation were carried out in all his London chapels until four years before his death, when, greatly to his annoyance, the lay authorities at City Road Chapel set aside his policy and allowed families to sit together.



Over the bandroom were apartments for Wesley, in which his mother died ; and at the end of the chapel was a dwelling-house for his domestics and assistant preachers ; while attached to the whole was a small building used as a coach-house and stable.

**Some Moravian Heresies.**—The "Societies" in London, in whose fellowship the Methodists of this period lived and labored, were at first wholly composed of pious Episcopalians and Moravians, chiefly the latter ; but a large number of persons who had been converted under the preaching of Whitefield and the Wesleys were soon incorporated into them, and frequent dissensions arose between the older and younger members, which John Wesley, who was now the recognized leader among them, was oftentimes called upon to settle. He could not be absent even for a few weeks without finding a quarrel on his return, either concerning the peculiar teachings of some newly arrived Moravians from Germany, or because of some petty personal grievance ; or, it might be, a rebellion against the authority of Charles Wesley, who in the absence of his elder brother felt a very great responsibility of management, and who, from first to last, had a decided talent for making trouble ; or perhaps the chronic jealousy of some of the Germans had broken out into open war against the Wesleys, and held that as new-comers and novices they should be more in subjection ; while the English converts fought for the rights and prerogatives of the Methodists under whose preaching they had been converted.

On one occasion Mr. Wesley, returning from a brief absence, found them contending over the Moravian notion of "Quietism," as it has been called ; that is to say, the alleged duty of the inquirer after God to wait in absolute spiritual silence and inaction until the Lord should appear to do his saving work in the soul. There was one Malthers, who aspired to be a theological doctor, and who taught, among other things, that faith does not admit of degrees ; there must be either the full assurance by the Holy Ghost of the indwelling of Christ, or else there is no faith at all ; while Wesley, following a higher authority, had taught them to look first for "the blade," then for "the ear," then for "the full corn in the ear." Some of the Moravians, in their attempts to honor the doctrine of salvation by faith, proceeded to the extravagance of teaching that believers were not



bound to obey the moral law, any more than the subjects of the King of England were bound to obey the King of France; while Wesley believed and taught that Christ came, not to destroy, but to fulfill the law.

One of the Germans, named Bell, insisted that it was deadly poison for a man to come to the Lord's Supper, or even to read the Scriptures and pray, until he was born of God. "If we read," said he, "the devil reads with us; if we pray, he prays with us; if we go to the sacrament, he goes with us." "Weak faith is no faith," said another. "As many go to hell by praying as by thieving," said a third.

Against these wild notions Wesley, who knew more of the true Moravian doctrine than the renegade Moravians themselves, contended with all his might, whereupon the Fetter Lane Society, of which he was one of the original members, voted to exclude him from its list of ministers, though they did not, at this time, expel him from membership.

**Mr. Wesley Leaves the Moravian Society.**—On the 20th of July, 1740, four days after the action above mentioned, Mr. Wesley went to one of the Fetter Lane love-feasts, and at its conclusion read a paper stating the errors into which they had fallen, and concluding thus: "I believe these assertions to be flatly contrary to the word of God. I have warned you hereof again and again, and besought you to turn back to the 'law and the testimony.' I have borne with you long, hoping you would turn. But, as I find you more and more confirmed in the error of your ways, nothing now remains but that I should give you up to God. You that are of the same judgment, follow me." Without saying more he then silently withdrew, eighteen or nineteen of the society following him. So ended John Wesley's connection with the Moravian Church in which he had learned so much and labored so well.

It would seem as if God were thus cutting his chosen servant loose from one tie after another which shortened his liberty and hindered his work. His heart clung to the regular methods of the ministry of the Establishment, but for no offense save that he preached too well and with too much success the Establishment turned him out of doors. The societies of his Moravian brethen, his first spiritual teachers, were then his chosen resting-place; but from this limited ministry and fellowship he was now compelled to take his departure



and strike out into all the world alone. The Fetter Lane Society was only too well named; it was a heavy clog to his feet; henceforth, in soul and body, the great leader must be free.

An attempt was made by Count Zinzendorf, the following year, to bring Mr. Wesley back into the Moravian field, but without avail. The Count, with his usual manner of authority, charged Wesley with changing his religion, quarreling with the brethren, and teaching false views of Christian perfection. But Wesley had now outgrown the Moravian leading-strings. The Count, whom he had once obeyed with abject submission, could no longer play the Pope over him, and as for the Moravian theology, Wesley says: "Waiving their odd and affected phrases; their weak, mean, silly, childish expressions; their crude, confused, and undigested notions; and their whims, unsupported either by Scripture or sound reason, I find three grand, un-retracted errors running through almost all their books, namely, universal salvation, antinomianism, and a kind of new, reformed quietism." No wonder the proposed reunion failed.

**The Methodist "United Society."**—From the Fetter Lane love-feast Wesley and the seceders proceeded to the Foundry, where, on the 23d day of July, 1740, he formed them into the first "United Society," on a plan much resembling those from whose fellowship he had departed. There were twenty-five men and forty-eight women in attendance. With this little band of Methodists the world was to be overrun.

"In the latter end of the year 1739," says Mr. Wesley, "eight or ten persons came to me in London, and desired that I should spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to 'flee from the wrath to come:' this was the rise of the 'United Societies.'" It would appear that these eight or ten persons were members of the Fetter Lane Society who were disturbed, and, likely enough, disgusted, by the continued dissensions and the vagaries of doctrine which they found therein; and it would be a natural solution of the problem of different dates, which would otherwise be confusing, to fix this voluntary action on the part of these eight or ten persons as the first suggestion to Mr. Wesley of the necessity of a separate organization, which, a few months later, was effected by the establishment of the first United Society at the Foundry.



**Lay Preachers—Howell Harris.**—In the Moravian societies, no less than in the State Church, it was held to be a sin and a shame for any but an ordained man to preach; though in the Moravian societies he might relate his experience and incidentally bring in a good deal of Scripture exposition therewith. But in the year 1739 Mr. Wesley had made the acquaintance of the Welsh evangelist, Howell Harris, a man who, with no ordination whatever, had been blessed with a success in the preaching of the Gospel in Wales almost equal to that which had attended the preaching of the Methodists in England. This Welshman appears to have been the first man in the United Kingdom who caught the idea of preaching the Gospel on the sole authority of the Author of the Gospel, instead of on the authority of a self-constituted Church.

Harris first commenced visiting from house to house in his own native parish, and in neighboring ones, about the same time that the Wesleys reached Georgia. Up to this period the morals of the Welsh were deplorably corrupt; and among both rich and poor, ministers and people, gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness were common. In the parish churches the name of Christ was hardly ever uttered, and in 1736 there were only six Dissenting chapels throughout the whole of northern Wales.

Crowds began to gather about him, and, almost without knowing it, Harris began to preach. The magistrates and clergy threatened him; but their threats failed to silence him. For a maintenance he set up a school, and meantime continued preaching. Numbers were convinced of sin, and these the young preacher, only twenty-two years of age, formed into small societies. At the end of 1737 persecuting malice ejected him from his school; but, instead of silencing the preacher, it led him to preach more than ever. He now gave himself entirely to the work of an evangelist, and henceforth generally delivered three or four, and sometimes five or six, sermons daily to crowded congregations. A wide-spread reformation followed. Public diversions became unfashionable, and religion became the theme of common conversation. Thus Howell Harris was an itinerant preacher at least a year and a half before Whitefield and Wesley; and, as the herald of hundreds more who were to follow, he met the fiercest persecutions with an undaunted soul and an unflinching face. Par-



sons and country squires menaced him, and mobs swore and flung stones and sticks at him; but he calmly pursued his way, laboring almost alone in his own isolated sphere until he met with Whitefield in the town of Cardiff, in 1739. Whitefield says he found him "a burning and shining light; a barrier against profanity and immorality; and an indefatigable promoter of the Gospel of Christ. During the last three years he had preached almost twice every day, for three or four hours together; had visited seven counties, established thirty societies, and the good work was growing and spreading under his hands."

**John Cennick.**—It is not quite proper, however, to reckon Harris as the first *Methodist* lay preacher: that honor belongs to John Cennick, the son of an English Quaker, who was brought up in the quiet, religious ways of that excellent people, but who, on leaving home to learn the trade of carpenter, in London, fell into the snares which always infest great cities, and soon became a gay young man of the world.

In 1735 John was convinced of sin while walking in Cheapside, and at once left off song-singing, card-playing, and attending theaters. Sometimes he wished to go into a popish monastery, to spend his life in devout retirement; at other times he longed to live in a cave, sleeping on fallen leaves, and feeding on forest fruits. He fasted long and often, and prayed nine times every day. He was afraid of seeing ghosts, and terribly apprehensive lest he should meet the devil. Fancying dry bread too great an indulgence for so great a sinner as himself, he began to feed on potatoes, acorns, crabs, and grass; and often wished he could live upon roots and herbs. At length, on September 6, 1737, he found peace with God, and went on his way rejoicing. Like Howell Harris, he at once commenced preaching; and also began to write hymns, a number of which Charles Wesley corrected for the press.

In May, 1739, on the recommendation of Mr. Whitefield, Cennick was placed in charge of the New Kingwood School, in which office he also rendered good service as a preacher, and gained strong hold upon the hearts of the colliers, as well as of their children. It was not long, however, before he began to be afflicted with certain Calvinistic notions, on account of which he regarded it as either his



privilege or his duty, or both, to quarrel with Mr. Wesley, against whom he headed a fierce opposition, based wholly upon differences of theological opinion, and, as a result, the work of revival in the region of Bristol languished for many years.

**Thomas Maxfield** comes next in the notable army of lay preachers; a young man of fair talents and deep piety, who, in 1740, came to Mr. Wesley, in London, and desired to assist him as a "son in the Gospel," and whom Mr. Wesley appointed to be the leader of the Society at the Foundry. Preaching, however, was no part of his duty. But the people were hungry for the bread of life, and young Maxfield showed a rare skill in breaking it to them. His efforts as an expositor of Scripture became more and more attractive, and presently it was reported to Mr. Wesley, then at Bristol, that the young man he had appointed simply as a leader of the Foundry Society had taken it upon himself to preach! On the receipt of these strange tidings Wesley hastened up to London to put a stop to such wickedness and folly; but on mentioning his intention to his mother, who, after the death of her husband had removed to London, that wise, strong-souled woman replied:—

"Take care what you do. Thomas Maxfield is as truly called of God to preach the Gospel as ever you were."

Mr. Wesley was now in a dilemma. He believed a great deal in the traditions of his Church; he also had great faith in the Christian judgment of his mother, whose words seemed to impress themselves upon him with more than human authority. It was as if the Lord had spoken to him by the mouth of this prophetess; therefore, laying aside his prejudices, he examined the young man as to his gifts and graces, and, instead of extinguishing him as a preacher, he promoted him to a kind of lay pastorate of the souls at the Foundry, thus establishing the first precedent of that vast system of "appointments" which has since held such a prominent place in Methodist economy.





WESLEY PREACHING ON HIS FATHER'S TOMB.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE CALVINISTIC CONTROVERSY, ETC.

**Opinions! Opinions!**—What crimes have been committed in thy name; especially in the name of theological opinions!

It is appalling to discover how little good, and how great evil, has



come of those theoretical disputes upon which good men have exhausted so much talent and time; while the small importance which the Head of the Church seems to attach to any sort of inferential theology appears in the fact that he carries on his work of saving penitent sinners, both by means of, and in spite of, long cherished and well defended religious opinions.

Whitefield, like his teachers the Wesleys, was a believer in free grace until he went to America; but at Northampton he met the



JOHN CALVIN. (FROM AN OLD PORTRAIT.)

great Dr. Jonathan Edwards, who taught him the theology of Calvin, and the young evangelist, having a better voice for rhetoric than brain for logic, was thereby very much beguiled. But by means of the Calvinist Edwards and Whitefield the Lord managed to carry on his work of saving sinners as well as by the Arminian John Wesley, though by no means to the same ultimate extent. In their opinions these men were as wide apart as the poles; but down underneath their opinions they had some real faith, some true religion, which the Lord could make use of in carrying on his kingdom without stopping to cor-



rect the one or take sides with the other; though it is plain enough, from the providence of God as well as from the general drift of the church doctrine, which side of this question he favors.

With his usual impetuosity, Whitefield plunged soul and body into the Calvinistic arena, and at once announced his doctrinal conversion in letters to his English friends. Wesley, who was quite as dogmatic as his pupil, besides being a much better logician and theologian, took up the case with great spirit; wrote some vigorous letters with a view to



ARMINIUS.

helping his young pupil out of his delusions, and preached and published a powerful sermon against Predestination, which was the signal for a general theological war.

For a time these old friends maintained pleasant personal relations in spite of the great divergence in their theology; but the debate waxed so hot, and attracted so many new combatants, that for years there was much bitterness between them, all coöperation ceased, and a complete separation, and almost estrangement, ensued. Writing from Savannah, under date of March 26, 1740, to Mr. Wesley, Whitefield says:—



"MY HONORED FRIEND AND BROTHER:—For once hearken to a child, who is willing to wash your feet. I beseech you, by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, if you would have my love confirmed toward you, write no more to me about misrepresentations wherein we differ. If possible, I am ten thousand times more convinced of the doctrine of *election*, and the *final* perseverance of those that are truly in Christ, than when I saw you last. You think otherwise. Why, then, should we dispute, when there is no probability of convincing? Will it not, in the end, destroy brotherly love, and insensibly take from us that cordial union and sweetness of soul which I pray God may always subsist between us? How glad would the enemies of the Lord be to see us divided! How many would rejoice should I join and make a party against you! How would the cause of our common Master suffer by our raising disputes about particular points of doctrine! *Honored sir*, let us offer salvation freely to all by the blood of Jesus; and whatever light God has communicated to us let us freely communicate to others. I have lately read the life of Luther, and think it in nowise to his honor that the last part of his life was so much taken up in disputing with Zwinglius and others, who in all probability equally loved the Lord Jesus, notwithstanding they might differ from him in all other points. Let this, dear sir, be a caution to us. I hope it will be to me; for, provoke me to it as much as you please, I intend not to enter lists of controversy with you on the points wherein we differ. Only, I pray to God that the more you *judge me*, the more I may *love you*, and learn to desire no one's approbation but that of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ."

Two months after this Whitefield writes again:—

CAPE LOPEN, *May 24, 1740.*

"HONORED SIR:—I cannot entertain prejudices against your conduct and principles any longer, without informing you. The more I examine the writings of the most experienced men and the experiences of the most established Christians, the more I differ from your notion about not committing sin, and your denying the doctrines of election and final perseverance of the saints. I dread coming to England, unless you are resolved to oppose these truths with less warmth than when I was there last. I dread your coming over to America, because



the work of God is carried on here (and that in a most glorious manner) by doctrines quite opposite to those you hold."

In June he writes to a friend in London:—

"For Christ's sake desire dear Brother Wesley to avoid disputing with me. I think I had rather die than see a division between us; and yet how can we walk together if we oppose each other?"

About the same time he again addresses Wesley as follows:—

SAVANNAH, *June 25, 1740.*

"MY HONORED FRIEND AND BROTHER:—For Christ's sake, if possible, never speak against election in your sermons. No one can say that I ever mentioned it in public discourse, whatever my private sentiments may be. For Christ's sake, let us not be divided among ourselves. Nothing will so much prevent a division as you being silent on this head. I am glad to hear that you speak up for an attendance on the means of grace, and do not encourage persons who run, I am persuaded, before they are called. The work of God will suffer by such imprudence.

"Perhaps the doctrines of election and of final perseverance have been abused; but, notwithstanding, they are children's bread, and ought not to be withheld from them, supposing they are always mentioned with proper cautions against the abuse of them. I write not this to enter into disputation. I cannot bear the thought of opposing you; but how can I avoid it, if you go about, as your brother Charles once said, to drive John Calvin out of Bristol."

This "children's bread" Wesley analyzes in the famous sermon above mentioned. Mr. Whitefield had professed his intention, notwithstanding his views of the doctrine of election, to continue his advocacy of the doctrine of free grace, which was to the credit of his heart if not of his head: to which Mr. Wesley replies:—

"Though you use softer words than some, you mean the self-same thing; and God's decree concerning the election of grace, according to your account of it, amounts to neither more nor less than what others call 'God's decree of reprobation.' Call it, therefore, by whatever name you please, 'election, preterition, predestination, or reprobation,' it comes in the end to the same thing. The sense of all is plainly



this—by virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned; it being impossible that any of the former should be damned, or that any of the latter should be saved.”

Wesley then proceeds to state the objections to such a doctrine:—

“1. It renders all preaching vain; for preaching is needless to them that are elected; for they, whether with or without it, will infallibly be saved. And it is useless to them that are not elected; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned.

“2. It directly tends to destroy that holiness which is the end of all the ordinances of God; for it wholly takes away those first motives to follow after holiness so frequently proposed in Scripture—the hope of future reward and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven and fear of hell.

“3. It directly tends to destroy several particular branches of holiness; for it naturally tends to inspire or increase a sharpness of temper which is quite contrary to the meekness of Christ, and leads a man to treat with contempt, or coldness, those whom he supposes to be outcasts from God.

“4. It tends to destroy the comfort of religion.

“5. It directly tends to destroy our zeal for good works; for what avails it to relieve the wants of those who are just dropping into eternal fire!

“6. It has a direct and manifest tendency to overthrow the whole Christian revelation; for it makes it unnecessary.

“7. It makes the Christian revelation contradict itself; for it is grounded on such an interpretation of some texts as flatly contradicts all the other texts, and indeed the whole scope and tenor of Scripture.

“8. It is full of blasphemy; for it represents our blessed Lord as a hypocrite and dissembler, in saying one thing and meaning another—in pretending a love which he had not; it also represents the most holy God as more false, more cruel, and more unjust than the devil; for, in point of fact, it says that God has condemned millions of souls to everlasting fire for continuing in sin which, for want of the grace he gives them not, they are unable to avoid.”

Wesley sums up the whole thus:—

“This is the blasphemy clearly contained in *the horrible decrees of*



predestination. And here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every assertor of it. You represent God as worse than the devil."

The publication of Mr. Wesley's sermons against predestination aroused the wrath of the Calvinists to fever heat. In the midst of the storm of sermons and pamphlets which it called forth Mr. Whitefield returned a second time from America, and, perceiving that the theological gulf between himself and his former friends was now impassable, he began to open his mouth against them. In his reply to Mr. Wesley's sermon, he says:—

"I frankly acknowledge I believe the doctrine of reprobation in this view—that God intends to give saving grace through Jesus Christ only to a certain number, and that the rest of mankind, after the fall of Adam, being justly left of God to continue in sin, will at last suffer that eternal death which is its proper wages." Nevertheless, he argues that preachers of the Gospel are bound to preach promiscuously to all, since they cannot possibly know who are the elect and who are the reprobate; and he defends the justice which dooms millions of unborn sinners to everlasting burnings, by showing that this was the fate which all mankind had justly incurred by reason of the sin of Adam, and that, instead of being an act of injustice on the part of God to destroy the many, it was an act of special grace on his part to save the few. The Bible statement that "the Lord is loving to every man, and his mercy is over all his works," Whitefield explains by showing that this refers to his *general* and not his *saving* mercy; and he goes on to deny the doctrine of Universal Redemption as set forth by Wesley, declaring it to be the highest reproach upon the dignity of the Son of God, challenging Wesley to make good the assertion that Christ died for them that perish, on the ground that if all were universally redeemed, it would follow that all must finally be saved.

Whatever may be said of the mysteries of the Calvinistic system in general, they were evidently too wonderful for Mr. Whitefield.

This wide difference of opinion naturally wrought an estrangement between these old friends, both of whom, with intemperate zeal, entered into this war of words, and the next year Mr. Wesley makes this entry in his Journal under the date of April 28, 1741:—

"Having heard much of Mr. Whitefield's unkind behavior since his return from Georgia, I went to him to hear him speak for himself,



that I might know how to judge. I much approved of his plainness of speech. He told me, he and I preached two different Gospels, and therefore he not only would not join with, or give me the right hand of fellowship, but was resolved publicly to preach against me and my brother, wheresoever he preached at all. Mr. Hall (who went with me) put him in mind of the promise he had made but a few days before, that, whatever his private opinion was, he would never publicly preach against us. He said, that promise was only an effect of human weakness, and he was now of another mind."

On one occasion, when the two friends met in a large social gathering, Whitefield mounted his hobby, and spoke largely and valiantly in defense of his favorite system. Wesley, on the other hand, was silent till all the company were gone, when, turning to the spurred and belted controversial knight, he quietly remarked, "Brother, are you aware of what you have done to-night?"

"Yes," said Whitefield, "I have defended truth."

"You have tried to prove," replied Wesley, "that God is worse than the devil; for the devil can only *tempt* a man to sin; but, if what you have said be true, God *forces* a man to sin; and, therefore, on your system, God is worse than the devil."

Howell Harris, the Welshman, and John Cennick, the Kingswood school-master, both took sides with the Calvinists. The former in writing a letter says:—

"I have been long waiting to see if Brother John and Charles should receive further light, or be silent and not oppose election and perseverance; but, finding no hope of this, I begin to be staggered how to act toward them. I plainly see that we preach two Gospels. My dear brother, deal faithfully with Brother John and Charles. If you like, you may read this letter to them. We are free in Wales from the hellish infection." What there is particularly "hellish" about the doctrine of free grace this enthusiastic predestinarian does not minutely point out. To an unprejudiced mind there would naturally appear to be more "hell" in the Calvinistic than in the Arminian view.

The Methodist revival was now only just begun, but already there were two sorts of Methodists, one under the lead of Whitefield, the other under the lead of Wesley; both believing in Jesus Christ as the



Redeemer and Saviour of men, and in the Holy Ghost as the Sanctifier and Comforter of believers, but separated from each other by a set of inferences falsely drawn from isolated texts: inferences which explained away the universal love of God: "opinions" which, if they were true, could have no possible value either to the elect or reprobate, and whose only purpose seems to have been to confuse the minds and sour the tempers of all persons to whose knowledge they might chance to come. One of these parties grew into what was called the "Lady Huntingdon Connection," after the name of Mr. Whitefield's chief patroness—a Christian communion of which comparatively few people have ever heard; the other has overrun the English-speaking world.

Thus according to the faith of each was it done unto him. Whitefield accepted the Gospel as God's plan to save a few, and to him was given a small spiritual family in the Lord. Wesley saw in the Gospel a plan to save the many, and his spiritual household, like that of Abraham, has become as the stars of heaven for multitude.

If there ever were a notable victim of the small theology of John Calvin, George Whitefield was that man. Doubtless he and the two Wesleys were made to work together. There was just that diversity of gifts which might have made these three men the three determinative points in the evangelical circle that should have encompassed the whole earth; but before this circle could be fairly projected, as in a little while it would have been, that deceiver who spoils so much of the good that lies within the reach of human hands separated these three chief friends by the only conceivable method by which he could have accomplished his infernal purpose.

It is a pitiful spectacle to see a great revivalist, with two nations waiting on his ministrations, wielding the powers of the world to come, and bringing sinners by multitudes to salvation—to see such a man turned from the work of preaching the Gospel to the fruitless and foolish task of setting forth what one of the great Calvinistic divines calls "the secret will of God."

Has Jehovah from all eternity determined to save just so many of the human race, and to pass by all the rest?

Whitefield answers, "Yes." Wesley answers, "No."

"But," says Whitefield, "God teaches, my friends, that election is true."



"And God teaches me to preach and print against 'it,'" answers Wesley.

Alas, for the estrangement of these apostolic men! If they had lived in our day, the one would have seen his "opinions," along with



LADY HUNTINGDON.

other rubbish of the same sort, thrust into out-of-the-way corners in the libraries of theological seminaries, while the other would have discovered that it is possible for Calvinists and Arminians to preach and pray harmoniously together, simply by keeping to the things which are



plainly laid down in the Gospel, and leaving all mere inferences thereon to take their own chances of living or dying.

**Lady Huntingdon.**—Among the distinguished persons who were led to a true faith in Christ through the labors of the Oxford Methodists was Selina, the Countess of Huntingdon.

During a severe illness she had been led to consecrate herself to the Lord, and on her recovery she faithfully fulfilled her promise by a long life of benevolence and devotion. Through the influence of her sister-in-law, Lady Margaret Hastings, afterward the wife of Ingham, of the Holy Club, Lady Selina became attached to the Methodists, and although she was an enthusiastic Churchwoman, a member of the aristocracy, and could even boast of having royal blood in her veins, she became, greatly to the disgust of the Earl, her husband, a frequent attendant of the Moravian Societies in London.

On Mr. Wesley's separation from the Fetter Lane Society she attached herself to his party, and invited him to preach in her house; but when Wesley and Whitefield fell out, because of their differences in theology, Lady Huntingdon, being a Calvinist, sided with Whitefield, and at length by her munificent gifts, as well as on account of her piety and talents, she became the acknowledged head of a little sect of Methodists who did not believe in free grace.

After the rupture between Wesley and his pupil, Whitefield had caused a Tabernacle to be erected for his own use not far from Mr. Wesley's Foundry; an arrangement well calculated to promote all sorts of ill will between these former friends, and the two congregations of their respective followers; but the Countess, who appears to have had almost a controlling influence with Whitefield—whom she afterward appointed one of her chaplains—induced him to seek for a reconciliation with Wesley, and in consequence thereof the breach was healed. The two men held a union service at Whitefield's Tabernacle, at which the Lord's Supper was celebrated by over a thousand communicants; and the brotherly love thus restored bound their hearts together to the day of their death. Sometimes the old fire would suddenly blaze up for a moment, when they began to talk of their respective "opinions," but Whitefield would smother it with his favorite saying, "Well, brother, let us agree to disagree."

After her husband's death the Countess devoted herself wholly to



a religious life: her house, at Chelsea, near London, became the headquarters of a revival movement among the nobility; many ladies of rank were converted; meetings for prayer and the reading of the Scriptures were held at their mansions, and some of the leading men of the kingdom occasionally attended the preaching of Whitefield, both at his Tabernacle and at the house of his patroness. Only a very few of them could be persuaded to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil; but they were all agreed that Lady Huntingdon's young chaplain was the most wonderful preacher they had ever heard.

This elect lady not only devoted herself, her time, and her influence to God, but, what was more rare, her ample fortune also. She sold her country-seats, her jewels, her elegant equipages, and other appendages of a fashionable and titled lady, and devoted the proceeds to the purchase of theaters, halls, and dilapidated chapels, which she caused to be fitted up for public worship conducted by some of her chaplains.

**Trevecca College.**—In order to provide a ministry for these chapels, Lady Huntingdon erected a theological school at Trevecca, in Wales, and called to its presidency the saintly Fletcher, Vicar of Madeley.

Here any young man, who was truly converted and ready to give himself to the work of preaching the Gospel, might receive board, tuition, and one suit of clothes a year, all at the college's expense. At first no theological tests were imposed; but afterward, as the Calvinistic controversy grew hotter and more bitter, the school was made so strictly an institution of the elect that no believer in free grace could be either a teacher or a pupil therein. Fletcher, on this account, resigned his charge of the school, which, as might have been expected, never rose above mediocrity.

During her life the Countess is said to have bestowed more than half a million of dollars in works of religion and charity, and at her death, in her eighty-fourth year, June 17, 1791, she bequeathed twenty thousand dollars for special benefactions, and the remainder of her fortune she devoted to the support of the sixty-four chapels which she had helped to build in England, Ireland, and Wales.

Like Wesley, Lady Huntingdon was greatly attached to the Established Church, but in order to retain the control of the chapels which



she had built she was forced to avail herself of the Act of Toleration, and thus these chapels became Dissenting meeting-houses, in which her Episcopalian friends would no longer preach or worship. After her death all connection between them was dissolved, and, instead of a little system, they became so many independent chapels.

It was from this fate of Lady Huntingdon's party, which Wesley, from the first, was able to foresee, that he constantly strove to save himself and his connection. If he had been willing to avail himself of the Act of Toleration his Societies would have been protected thereby;



TREVECCA COLLEGE.

but they would have thereby become Dissenting bodies, which, of all things, Wesley dreaded. He taught the Methodists to claim their places as regular members of the Established Church, and to hold their relations to the United Societies as a secondary matter, not involving their ecclesiastical status, but merely a provisional arrangement for helping their growth in grace; therefore they were without protection as Dissenters, and without influence as members of the Establishment,



and their persons and their property were for many years subject to the mercy of any mob, magistrate, or High-Church parson whom Satan might stir up to torment them.

**Class-Meetings.**—Like every other step in the progress of early Methodism, the establishment of “classes” was plainly providential.

The number of members in Wesley’s United Societies had now greatly increased. That at the Foundry contained, in the year 1742, about eleven hundred members. There was also a large Society at Bristol, and many smaller ones scattered over England and Wales. In the county of Yorkshire alone there were sixty Societies, which had been established by Wesley’s companion in Georgia, who shortly afterward joined the Moravians, and soon faded out of sight. Hitherto, Wesley and his brother, with some little assistance from the other Oxford Methodists, had exercised a pastoral oversight over these Societies, but in February, 1742, an accident led to an important addition to the simple Methodist system.

In the erection of the “New Room” at Bristol, the first of all the Wesleyan preaching houses, a large debt had been incurred, and on the date above mentioned some of the principal members of the Bristol Society met together to consult how to raise the money to pay it. One of them stood up and said, “Let every member of the Society give a penny a week till the debt is paid.” Another answered, “Many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it.” “Then,” said the former, “put eleven of the poorest with me; and if they can give any thing, well; I will call on them weekly; and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbors weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.” “It was done,” writes Wesley; “and in awhile, some of these informed me they found such and such an one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately, ‘This is the thing, the very thing, we have wanted so long.’”

Accordingly he called together these weekly collectors of money to pay the debt of the Bristol Chapel, and desired each, in addition to collecting money, to make particular inquiry into the behavior of the members whom they visited. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected; and thus the Society was purged of unworthy members.



Within six weeks after this, on March 25, Wesley introduced the same plan in London, where he had long found it difficult to become acquainted with all the members personally. He requested several earnest and sensible men to meet him, to whom he explained his difficulty. They all agreed, that to come to sure, thorough knowledge of each member, there could be no better way than to divide the Society into classes, like those at Bristol. Wesley at once appointed as leaders those in whom he could most confide; and thus, in three years after their first organization, the United Societies were regularly divided into classes.

At first the leaders visited each member of their classes at their own houses; but for convenience it was presently arranged that the class should assemble once a week, at a time and place most convenient for the whole, the time being spent chiefly in conversing with those present, one by one, the leader beginning and ending each meeting with singing and prayer.

Thus class meetings began. Wesley writes: "It can scarce be conceived what advantages have been reaped by this little prudential regulation. Many now experienced that Christian fellowship of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to bear one another's burdens, and naturally to care for each other's welfare. And as they had daily a more intimate acquaintance, so they had a more endeared affection for each other. Upon reflection I could not but observe this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. As soon as any Jews or heathen were so convinced of the truth as to forsake sin and seek the gospel of salvation, the first preachers immediately joined them together; took an account of their names; advised them to watch over each other; and met these *catechumens*, as they were then called, apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them and for them according to their several necessities."

**The Quarterly Visitation**, or the "Quarterly Meeting," as it is usually called in America, was another providential method developed by the circumstances and necessities of the early Methodist Societies. The appointment of leaders over the classes devolved upon Mr. Wesley, but the difficulty of finding suitable persons in sufficient numbers induced him to arrange to meet the classes himself, if



possible, as often as four times a year. The performance of this duty made him, of necessity, an itinerant, and from this time to almost the day of his death John Wesley was the greatest traveler in the United Kingdom. As the number of the Societies increased, it became impossible for him to meet all the classes himself, and thus the duty was devolved upon his helpers, but the coming of the preacher, who, if he was not Wesley himself was his personal representative,



WESLEY'S ORPHAN-HOUSE AT NEWCASTLE.

was regarded as an important event in the life of the simple-minded people of which the first Societies were chiefly composed; and this quarterly visitation became one of the strongest bonds by which the Societies were held together.

**Wesley at Newcastle.**—In the year 1742 Mr. Wesley extended his missionary journeys into the north of England, and on the 28th of May reached the smoky metropolis of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where, even after his Kingswood experiences, he was greatly



shocked at the degradation and wickedness of the people. Drunkenness and swearing were habitual, and even the mouths of the little children were filled with oaths and curses.

On Sunday morning, at seven o'clock, Wesley and his traveling companion, John Taylor, took their stand in Sandgate, the poorest and most abandoned part of the town, and began to sing the Old Hundredth Psalm. Presently the people began to come together to see what was the matter, and about the time Wesley had finished his



ORPHAN-HOUSE WESLEYAN SCHOOLS, NEWCASTLE.

(On the site of the old Orphan House.)

preaching, which followed the singing, he had a congregation of from twelve to fifteen hundred persons, some of whom he declares to have been the worst and most profane of any barbarians he had ever addressed. Concerning the profanity of this people it was said "they used the language as though they had received a liberal education in the regions of woe." Wesley's text on this occasion was, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."



When the service was ended the people stood gaping with astonishment, upon which the preacher said: "If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again."

At five o'clock he again took his stand on the hill opposite Keelman's Hospital,\* while just before him swarmed the denizens of Sandgate and the crowded alleys by the river Tyne. In Moorfields and Kennington Common Wesley had preached to congregations estimated at from ten to twenty thousand people, but on this occasion he preached to the largest as well as to the wildest crowd he had ever seen, who listened to him respectfully, and after the preaching pressed upon him for a nearer view, or perhaps a shake of the hand, and were, as he says, "ready to tread him under foot out of pure love and kindness."

From this time forth Newcastle became one of the strongholds of Methodism. Here Wesley formed a society, which he calls "a wild, staring, loving society," and here he also opened a second school, somewhat after the manner of the one at Kingswood, in which forty poor children were to be taught; the scholars as well as the teachers to be selected by himself and his brother. There was also a provision for supporting a small number of orphans, from whence the school derived its popular name, "The Newcastle Orphanage."

**Wesley Preaching on His Father's Tomb.**†—In June of this year Mr. Wesley made a visit to his old home at Epworth. The parish clergyman was a miserable man of dissolute habits, who hated the Methodists with all his might, and on the appearance of their leader in his parish he poured out his wrath against them in two discourses which Wesley describes as two of the bitterest and vilest sermons he ever heard. He was desirous of preaching to his old neighbors, and, being shut out of the church, he resolved to preach in the church-yard—a proceeding proper enough on general principles, but a plain breach of the law of the Prayer Book—and taking his stand upon the broad, low platform which marked the grave of his father, he preached with wonderful power to the crowds that gathered about him.

\* "Keelman" is Newcastle-English for "bargeman;" this class of persons being very numerous at Newcastle, where they are employed on the heavy boats or barges used in transporting coal.

† See beginning of chapter.



During the week of his visit to Epworth he preached from this strange pulpit every day. On one occasion his voice was drowned by the cries of the penitents; several persons dropped down as if they had been dead, and the quiet old church-yard was turned into an "inquiry-room," in which many sinners found peace with God, and which then resounded with songs of joy, thanksgiving, and praise.

John Whitelamb, Wesley's brother-in-law, at that time the curate at Wroote, who heard him preach at Epworth, says, in writing to him:—

"Your presence creates an awe, as if you were an inhabitant of another world."



JOHN WESLEY AT FORTY YEARS OF AGE.  
(From Tyerman's "Life and Times of Wesley.")

But Epworth was, of old, a place given to religious persecution, and no wonder that among the descendants of people who could burn the house of their clergyman at midnight because they did not like his politics, some should be found who would annoy a Methodist because they did not like his religion.

There were a good many conversions among the Epworth sinners, but some of them were not allowed to live in peace. On one occasion a whole wagon load of them were arrested and carried before a magistrate.



"With what offense are these people charged?" asked the squire.

"They pretend to be better than other people," said one of their accusers.

"And they pray from morning till night," said another.

"They have *converted* my wife," said another; but he added, as a grudging admission of the truth, "till she went among them she had *such* a tongue, but now she is as quiet as a lamb."

"Take them back," said the justice, "take them back, and let them convert all the scolds in town."

**Death of Mrs. Wesley.**—After the death of his father, John Wesley, like a dutiful and affectionate son, assumed the support of his mother, and on the completion of the repairs at the Foundry removed her to a comfortable home which he had fitted up therein. The incident concerning her defense of young Maxfield, the lay preacher, shows that she took an active interest in the affairs of the Society; and the constant presence of such a woman at the head-quarters of Methodism could not fail to be of great advantage.

Soon after his visit to Epworth Wesley heard that his mother was seriously ill, and hastened home, only to find her just on the borders of heaven.

Her death and burial are thus recorded in his Journal, under date of Friday, July 23, 1743:—

"About three in the afternoon I went to see my mother, and found her change was near. I sat down on the bedside; she was in her last conflict, unable to speak, but I believe quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward, while we commended her soul to God. From three to four the silver cord was loosing, and the wheel breaking at the cistern; and then, without any struggle, or sigh, or groan, her soul was set at liberty. We stood round the bed, and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech, 'Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God.'

"Sunday, August 1. \*Almost an innumerable company of people being gathered together, about five in the afternoon I committed to the earth the body of my mother, to sleep with her fathers. The portion of Scripture from which I afterward spoke was, 'I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth



and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead small and great stand before God, and the books were opened. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.' It was one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw, or expect to see, on this side eternity. We set up a plain stone at the head of her grave, inscribed with the following words:—

HERE LIES THE BODY OF  
MRS. SUSANNAH WESLEY,  
THE YOUNGEST AND LAST SURVIVING DAUGHTER OF  
DR. SAMUEL ANNESLEY.



MRS. WESLEY'S MONUMENT.

The place of Mrs. Wesley's burial was at Bunhill-Fields, now in the midst of that vast aggregation of towns, called London; a place which is also memorable as containing the tomb of John Bunyan.

**Mrs. Wesley's New Tomb.**—In the year 1869 an appeal was made to the "boys of England," in the columns of one of the



English religious papers, for funds to restore the tomb of Daniel De Foe, whose body also lies in Bunhill-Fields. Shortly afterward, a similar appeal appeared in the *Methodist Recorder* to the "Mothers and Daughters of Methodism," to erect a suitable monument over the grave of Susannah Wesley, "the mother of the Revs. John and Charles Wesley; the former of whom was, under God, the Founder of the Societies of the people called Methodists." This appeal met with a hearty response, and the monument has been erected; not, however, in the Bunhill-Fields' Burial Ground, but on a much more eligible site, in front of the City-road Chapel, and immediately adjoining the house in which her most distinguished son lived and died. The inscription is as follows:—

HERE LIES THE BODY OF

MRS. SUSANNAH WESLEY,

WIDOW OF THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, M. A.,

(LATE RECTOR OF EPWORTH, IN LINCOLNSHIRE,)

WHO DIED JULY 23, 1742,

AGED 73 YEARS.

SHE WAS THE YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF THE

REV. SAMUEL ANNESLEY, D.D., EJECTED BY THE ACT

OF UNIFORMITY FROM THE RECTORY OF ST. GILES'S,

CRIPPLEGATE, AUG. 24, 1662.

SHE WAS THE MOTHER OF NINETEEN CHILDREN,

OF WHOM THE MOST EMINENT WERE THE

REV. JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY;

THE FORMER OF WHOM WAS UNDER GOD THE

FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETIES OF THE PEOPLE

CALLED METHODISTS.

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IN SURE AND CERTAIN HOPE TO RISE,

AND CLAIM HER MANSION IN THE SKIES,

A CHRISTIAN HERE HER FLESH LAID DOWN,

THE CROSS EXCHANGING FOR A CROWN.





A VIEW IN THE BLACK COUNTRY—DUDLEY AT NIGHT.

## CHAPTER IX.

### STORMY DAYS FOR METHODISM.

**The Black Country.**—The southern section of the county of Staffordshire, between Wolverhampton and Birmingham, known as "The Black Country," is notable in Methodist history as the scene of some of the most violent persecutions.

In 1743 Charles Wesley made a preaching tour through these almost infernal regions, in which already there had been a considerable awakening. At Wednesbury he found a society of more than three hundred members, many of whom had been reformed from the wildest and wickedest ways of life, but the town was full of people who raged against the movement like untamed beasts of the forest.

He had need of courage who should venture to preach under the auspices of this Society. But Charles Wesley was a brave man. Moreover, the success of his brother and Mr. Whitefield in open-air preaching, and the evident favor of the Lord which had attended these efforts, had converted him to that idea; and now there was no more courageous open-air preacher in England than the High-church,



poetical Charles Wesley. Having met his brother at Wednesbury, he determined to preach in the neighboring town of Walsal, and a considerable number of the brethren formed a procession with Wesley at their head and marched thither, singing as they went, while the rabble hooted at them as they passed through the streets.

Charles Wesley took his stand on the steps of the Walsal Market-house, with the faithful Wednesbury Society about him. Presently a mob was raised, which bore down upon the little company like a flood, with the intention of sweeping them away. Finding that the Methodists were inclined to stand their ground, the mob next commenced to throw stones, many of which struck the preacher, but failed to stop his discourse. When he was near the close thereof, the surging multitude pressed so hard upon him as to push him from his platform; he, however, regained his feet in time to save himself from being trampled to death, and stretched out his hands to pronounce the benediction, when he was again thrown down. A third time he regained his position and proceeded to return thanks, as was his custom, after which he passed through the midst of the rioters, who were raging on every hand, but, strangely enough, no one laid a hand upon him.

From Walsal Charles Wesley proceeded to Sheffield, where, he says, "Hell from beneath was moved to oppose us." The house in which he was preaching being in danger of destruction by the mob, in order to save the house he announced that he would preach out of doors; whereupon the crowd followed him to the place chosen for this purpose, and he finished his sermon under a shower of stones.

After preaching he returned to the Methodist house where he had been entertained, which was also used as a preaching place, and here the mob continued their violence through the whole night. Wesley would have gone out to meet them, in order to save the home of his friend from destruction, but he was not permitted to do so, lest it should cost him his life. The rabble raged all night, and by morning they had pulled down one end of the house, but no personal injury was received either by Mr. Wesley or his friends.

This disgraceful tumult he ascribes to the sermons which were preached against the Methodists by the clergy of the Sheffield Churches.



One would suppose that after such experiences Charles Wesley would have been ready to shake off the dust of his feet against the town of Sheffield, and depart to more peaceful scenes; but the next morning he began his preaching again at five o'clock, and later in the day held another out-door service in the very heart of the town, on returning from which he passed the ruins of the little Methodist chapel, whereof hardly one stone remained upon another. Again the mob surrounded his lodging-place at night, and threatened to tear



A "BLACK COUNTRY" WELCOME.

(Wesley at Wednesbury.)

down the dwelling, which was already partially destroyed, but he tells us that he was much fatigued, and dropped to sleep with that word, "Scatter thou the people that delight in war."

Charles Wesley often acknowledged himself to be constitutionally a timid man; but there was nothing he feared so much as to offend his own conscience; and under the inspiration of duty this lamb became a lion, wholly insensible to fear by reason of the



overmastering religious fervor which lifted him above all sense of what the world calls danger.

It was no unusual experience for the Wesleys to find a mob waiting for them on their arrival at the various towns on their route; indeed, a peaceable quarterly visitation in the Black Country, or Cornwall, was regarded as rather an exception to the rule. On one occasion, while preaching in the chapel at St. Ives, the place was attacked by the mob, its windows smashed in, its seats torn up, and the fragments borne away, with the shutters, poor-box, and all but the stone walls. Wesley bade the people stand still and see the salvation of God, resolving to continue with them until the end of the strife. After raging about an hour, the ruffians fell to quarreling among themselves, broke the head of the town clerk, who was their captain, and drove one another out of the room. Having kept the field, the Society gave thanks for the victory. "The word of God runs and is glorified," writes Wesley, "but the devil rages horribly."

The converted miners were as fearless in duty as they had been in fights and brawls. Wesley says, "I cannot find one of this people who fears those that can kill the body only." Hereby some of their bitterest persecutors were conquered, or won by their meek endurance, and became standard-bearers of the cross among them.

Similar assaults were made in other places. At Poole a drunken hearer attempted to drag the preacher from his stand, and a churchwarden, heading the rabble, drove him and his congregation out of the parish. The Church record bears to this day an entry of the score at the village inn of drinks furnished to the mob "for driving out the Methodists." A strong man behind Wesley aimed several blows with a heavy club at his head, but they were all turned aside, Wesley says he knew not how. He was struck a powerful blow on the chest, and another on the mouth, making the blood gush forth; but he declares he felt no more pain from either than if he had merely been touched with a straw. The noise on every side, he says, was like a roaring sea. Some cried, "Knock his brains out!" "Down with him!" "Kill him!" "Crucify him!" Others shouted, "No, let us hear him first!" And while they were thus disputing among themselves whether to hear him or kill him, Wesley broke out in loud supplication, which prayer was suddenly answered by Him who



## STORMY DAYS FOR METHODISM.

holdeth the hearts of all men in his hand, and the ruffian that headed the mob, and who was a professional prize-fighter, was suddenly struck with awe and tenderness, and when Wesley had reached the "Aunt" this fellow turned to him and said:—

"Sir, I will spend my life for you; follow me, and not one of us here shall touch a hair of your head." Then a stout butcher cried that he also would stand by him, and several others at once rallied his protection, before whom the people fell back as if by common consent, and, led on through their open ranks by these heaven-champions, Wesley passed safely through the midst of the mob, escaped to his lodgings unharmed.

As in Sheffield, so in Wednesbury and elsewhere, the clerical magistrates favored the mob: the former instigated it, the latter refused to suppress it. The Methodists of the town had endured intolerable wrongs. Women and children had been beaten down and dragged in the gutters of the streets; their houses had been attacked, their windows and furniture demolished; and so was the police of that day that the rioters were accustomed to assemble at the blowing of a horn, and virtually usurped the government of the town for nearly half a year.

It was in view of these sufferings on the part of his people, of which his younger brother had had such a rough experience, that John Wesley presented himself in the Black Country to face the fury of his enemies. God was evidently with him, proving again the truth of the declaration that he is able to make the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. Doubtless it was the swift answer to Wesley's prayer that turned the hearts of the leaders of the mob, so that from desiring to kill him they were ready to die in defending him; for on no other theory can this sudden change of feeling and purpose be explained.

From Wednesbury Wesley went to Nottingham, where his brother Charles was preaching. "He looked," says the latter, "like a soldier of Christ: his clothes were torn to tatters."

**Wesley and the Methodists Denounced as Papists and Traitors.**—These were, indeed, stormy days for Methodism. But the storm had not yet reached its height.

On the 15th of November, 1774, King George sent a message to



the House of Parliament, saying that he had received intelligence that the oldest son of the Pretender, that is to say, the heir of the papist King James II. had arrived in France, and that preparations were there being made to invade England and place this scion of the house of Stuart upon the throne. Great excitement followed. War was declared against France, the coast was watched with the utmost care, all the military forces were ordered to the posts of duty, the *Habeas Corpus* act was suspended, and a proclamation was issued for a general fast.

All papists and reputed papists were forbidden to remain within ten miles of the cities of Westminster and London. Loyal addresses were presented to the King by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, by the merchants of London, by the convocation of the province of Canterbury, by the Quakers, by the Protestant Dissenters, and by many others; but there is no account of any loyal address being presented by the Methodists; they being so small a body as yet, such an action would have seemed ridiculous. For this or some other equally foolish reason rumors began to prevail that the Methodist preachers were plotting to aid the house of Stuart, and all sorts of calumnies against them flew over the land. It was reported that Wesley had held an interview with the Pretender in France; that he had been taken up for high treason; that he was safe in prison awaiting execution. It was also declared that he was a Jesuit, and kept a sort of head-quarters for Romish priests in his house at London. Spain, being a papist country, was expected to aid the fortunes of the house of Stuart, and Wesley was said to have received large remittances of money from thence, in order to raise a body of twenty thousand men to aid the expected Spanish invasion. Other slanders followed, which accused him of being an Anabaptist, a Quaker, a malefactor who had been prosecuted for selling gin, and finally, it was alleged that the genuine John Wesley had hanged himself and was dead and buried, and the "John Wesley" who was figuring in politics was merely a pretender: all of which reports found ready believers among people who desired a reason for hating the Methodists.

The favorite accusation against Wesley was that he was a disguised papist, and an agent of the Pretender; and when the proclamation was made requiring all Roman Catholics to leave London, Wesley was



actually summoned by the Justices of Surrey to appear before their court, and required to take the oath of allegiance to the King, and to sign the declaration against popery. His brother Charles was heard on a certain occasion, in a public prayer, to beseech the Lord to "call home his banished ones," which, it was insisted, must mean the house of the Stuarts. On this account he was indicted, and brought before the magistrates in Yorkshire, where he succeeded in explaining the purely scriptural meaning of the phrase, and was allowed to go about his business.

These were carnival days for the rabble: almost any violence was excusable if it were done under the pretense of fighting the friends of the Stuarts—a convenient pretense, and certain to be misused. In Staffordshire the Methodists were assailed on this ground, not only in their preaching places, but in the streets and at their homes. Houses were broken into, furniture destroyed and thrown into the streets, and women and children were abused in a manner which, Wesley says, was too horrible to be related. Sometimes the Methodist houses were torn down, and every thing which they contained was carried away, the mob helping themselves to the things which pleased them best, no one offering the slightest resistance. Men and women fled for their lives; in some cases leaving their children behind them. Many of the townspeople, too, were in such terror of the mob that they were actually afraid to receive these little homeless wanderers into their houses because they were Methodist children. The mob divided into several bands, and marched from village to village, and the whole region was in a state little short of civil war.

Some of the "gentlemen" who had incited these outrages threatened to turn away the colliers and miners in their service if they showed any sympathy for the Methodists, and finally drew up a paper for the members of the Societies to sign, pledging themselves never to invite or receive a Methodist preacher again, on which condition it was promised that the mob should be checked at once; otherwise they were given to understand that they must take their own chances. This infamous pledge was offered to several members of Societies, but the faithful believers declared that, having lost their goods, nothing else could follow but the loss of their lives, which they were willing to lose rather than to wrong their consciences.



**Wesley Faces his Enemies.**—What was the surprise and indignation of Mr. Wesley to find these outrages described in the London newspapers as perpetrated by the Methodists, who, "upon some pretended insults from the Church party, had risen in insurrection against the Government!" He at once hastened from London to sustain the persecuted Societies in the riotous districts, for it was his rule "always to face the mob." At Dudley, one of the mining towns, he learned that the lay preacher of the station had been greatly abused at the instigation of the parish minister, and would probably have been murdered had not an honest Quaker loaned him his broad-brimmed hat and plain coat, in which disguise he managed to escape. One of the magistrates refused to hear a Methodist who came to take oath that his life was in danger. Another delivered a member of the Society up to the mob, and, waving his hand over his head, shouted: "Hurrah, boys! well done! stand up for the Church!"

On this memorable tour Wesley cheered and steadied the Societies, and, taking his stand in the public squares of those towns where there had been the greatest violence, he boldly preached the truth to them. These services, performed in the immediate danger of his life, he describes in his Journal as "taming the mobs." "The rocks," he says, "were melted on every side, and the very ringleaders declared that they would make no more disturbance."

At Epworth, where the old persecuting spirit still raged, he found his preacher, Thomas Westall, who had been driven away from Nottingham by the mob and the Mayor. As he passed through the town of Birstal, in Yorkshire, he came upon the mob as they were tearing down the house of John Nelson, the sturdy Methodist preacher, of whom we shall see more in due time. The cowardly rabble fled on the approach of Wesley and his companions, who advanced upon them with no other weapons than some Methodist hymns, which they were singing right lustily.

The storm, meanwhile, had reached Cornwall, also. The chapel at St. Ives was entirely destroyed, and on his arrival there Wesley was saluted with shouts, and stones, and rubbish. Concerning the Methodists of St. Just, another Cornwall parish, he says: "They were the chief of the whole country for hurling, fighting, drinking, and all manner of wickedness: but many of the lions have become lambs,



and are continually praising God, and calling their old companions in sin to come and magnify the Lord together." Thus was illustrated, over and over again, the truth of the apostle's words, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." \*

These are but a few of the outrages endured by the Methodists during this British craze over the expected invasion of the papist Pretender; but to their everlasting honor be it spoken, none of these things moved them; and, what is more a matter of wonder, this senseless persecution, instigated by the clergy and winked at by the magistrates, did not drive them from their loyalty either to the Church or the King. If they had only been willing to become Dissenters they would have been at peace; but they were continually urged by the Wesleys to continue faithful to the Establishment, and there was no redress for them, in view of their irregularities, except under the common law, which, in those days as well as in these, was a luxury that poor people could ill afford, and which then, as now, was apt to cost a great deal more than it was worth.

As a specimen of the justice administered in England in those times take the following: One Edward Greenfield, a tinner of the parish of St. Just, in Cornwall, was arrested under a warrant issued by Dr. Borlase, one of the clerical magistrates, and Mr. Wesley, hearing thereof, presented himself before the court and demanded of what offense the man had been guilty.

"The man is well enough in other things," was the reply; "but gentlemen cannot bear his impudence. Why, sir, he says he knows his sins are forgiven!"

Such "impudence" as this in a poor workingman was doubtless a sore offense in the eyes of the "gentlemen," who had good reason to know their sins were not forgiven; but for a magistrate and a clergyman to throw a poor man into prison on such a charge indicates a degree of bigotry and tyranny of which, in these days, it is almost impossible to conceive.

**The Press-gang.**—Among the beauties of the British government in those times was the "press-gang," by which His Majesty's army and navy were forcibly recruited in times of war—and there used to be war almost all the time. It was lawful to seize, for service

\* See STEVENS'S "History of Methodism," vol. I.



in the navy, any able-bodied seaman between the ages of eighteen and forty-five : and for this purpose small detachments of trusty tars, with an officer at their head, were accustomed to prow around the haunts of the sailors on shore, and carry off their prisoners to the man-of-war lying at anchor in the river or bay. A modified form of this indignity was sometimes practiced to capture recruits for the army. A vagrant might be impressed for a soldier, if he could not give a satisfactory account of himself, and under this pretext it became a favorite means of persecuting the Methodist lay preachers to arrest them as strolling vagabonds, having no visible means of support, and thrust them into the vilest dungeon to be found, to await the arrival of some regiment, into which they were impressed to serve in the rank and file. An officer, with his *posse*, would even break through an out-door congregation, seize the preacher, drag him off to prison, and hold him as a pressed man, from which durance vile he could only escape by the payment of a fine, or ransom of forty pounds.

The "Westminster Journal" for June 8, 1745, narrates that a noted Methodist preacher named Tolly had been pressed for a soldier in Staffordshire, and had appeared before the magistrates, attended by many of his "deluded followers of both sexes, who pretended he was a learned and holy man; and yet it appeared he was only a journeyman joiner, and had done great mischief among the colliers." The poor, luckless joiner was, therefore, coupled to a sturdy tinker, and sent off to Stafford jail. He had already been impressed once before, and the Methodists had subscribed £40 to obtain his freedom, and were intending to repeat the kindness; but the editor of the "Westminster Journal" hopes that the magistrates will be proof against golden bribes; for "such wretches are incendiaries in a nation."

**Caught in his Own Trap.**—One of Wesley's preachers named Drew was, however, of a less placid temper than his leader. While traveling his circuit, in Devonshire, he was interrupted in one of his open-air sermons in the hamlet of Saddiport by the appearance of a rabble headed by a magistrate named Stevens, who ordered the parish clerk to pull the preacher down from the chair which served him for a pulpit. The clerk, more sensible than the magistrate, was unwilling to obey the order, and said: "Let him alone,



sir; let him preach it out." But Stevens's churchly blood was up, and, finding the clerk would not serve him, he executed the order himself, and dragged the preacher to the ground.

The poor man was now at the mercy of the mob, who began to push him toward the mouth of an old quarry pit near by, the magistrate all the while urging them on; and when they came to the pit, Drew, finding that he must inevitably be flung into it, seized the magistrate by the skirt of his coat just as he was pushed over the edge, and both were precipitated into the depths below; from which they scrambled out scratched and bruised, the magistrate having received his full share of the punishment.



An attempt was even made by the Cornwall parson, Dr. Borlase, already mentioned, to impress the leader of all the Methodists, and make him fight the battles of King George. One day, as Wesley was preaching at Gwennap, two men, raging like maniacs, rode into the midst of the congregation, and began to lay hold upon the people. In the midst of the disturbance Wesley and his friends commenced singing; when Dr. B. lost his patience, and bawled to his attendants: "Seize him! seize him! I say, seize the preacher for His Majesty's service." The attendants not moving, he cursed them with the greatest bitterness, leaped off his horse, caught hold of Wesley's cassock, crying, "I take you to serve His Majesty." Wesley made no resistance, but walked with him for three quarters of a mile; by which time the courage of the valorous parson failed him, and he was glad to let the arch-Methodist go.



**John Nelson**, the Birstal preacher whose name has already been mentioned was one of the notable men who in the early days of the Methodist movement were called out by Mr. Wesley as helpers; or who, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, offered themselves



JOHN NELSON.

to him of their own accord to serve as "sons in the gospel." He was a stone-mason of Birstal, in Yorkshire, the son of a godly father, well instructed in the Scriptures, and master of his trade, the husband of a good wife, and blessed with outward comforts; nevertheless, he says he lived a life of intolerable misery on account of his intense convictions of sin. For years he was tormented with awful dreams by night and gloomy forebodings by day, till, in the bitterness of his spirit, he declared that he would rather be strangled than to live thirty more such years as the thirty he had just passed. He sought everywhere for religious instruction, but neither the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, Independents, Roman Catholics, nor Quakers, could point him the way to pardon and peace.



"I had now," he says, "tried all but the Jews, and I thought it was to no purpose to go to them." He now began to wander about from place to place, working a short time at his trade, and putting himself in the way of all the help he could hear of for his wretched state of mind; but nowhere could he find rest for his miserable soul. When Mr. Whitefield commenced his preaching at Moorfields he went to hear him. "He was to me," says Nelson, "as a man that could play well on an instrument, for his preaching was pleasant to me; and I loved the man so that if any one had offered to disturb him I was ready to fight for him. I got some hope of mercy, so that I was encouraged to pray on and spend my leisure hours in reading the Scriptures."

The first time that John Wesley preached at Moorfields Nelson was present, and in his account of his conversion he says:—

"O, that was a blessed morning to my soul!

"As soon as he got upon the stand he stroked back his hair, and turned his face toward where I stood, and I thought he fixed his eyes upon me. His countenance struck such an awful dread upon me before I heard him speak that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock, and when he did speak, I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me." \*

Nelson might well think this, for it was one of Wesley's peculiar characteristics to wind up his discourses and drive home the doctrine thereof with the most pointed and personal exhortations. At such times he spoke as if he were addressing himself to an individual, so that every one whose condition he might describe felt as if he were singled out from all the rest, and the preacher's words, like the eyes of a portrait, seemed to look at every beholder.

"Who art thou," he cried, "that now feelest both thine inward and outward ungodliness? Thou art the man! I want *thee* for my Lord; I challenge *thee* for a child of God by faith; the Lord hath need of *thee*. Thou who feelest that thou art just fit for hell, art just fit to advance his glory—the glory of his free grace.

"Look unto Jesus! There is the Lamb of God who taketh away thy sins! Plead thou no works, no righteousness of thine own; that were in very deed to deny the Lord that bought thee. No. Plead



thou singly the blood of the covenant, the ransom paid for thy proud, stubborn, sinful soul." No wonder John Nelson imagined that the preacher had him in his eye.

Soon after this he found rest in Christ, and so completely did he resign himself to the Lord that he straightway began to declare it to be his "great business in this world to get well out of it." Upon this some of his London friends became exceeding angry at the preacher who had "turned John Nelson's head;" some of them even vowed that they would be glad to knock Wesley's brains out, for he would be the ruin of many families if he were allowed to live and go on converting people after this fashion.

Nelson was now employed on some work for the Government, and the foreman wished him to work on Sunday, on the plea that the "King's business required haste," and that it was customary to work on Sunday for His Majesty when they were pressed for time; but Nelson stoutly declared that he would not work on Sunday for any man in England, unless to put out a fire or some such work of necessity or mercy.

"Your religion has made you a rebel against the King," said the foreman.

"No," said Nelson, "it has made me a better subject than ever I was. The greatest enemies the King has are the Sabbath-breakers, the swearers, the drunkards, and such like, for these pull down judgments upon both King and country." Thus the sturdy Methodist won the day, and lost nothing; for his reputation for integrity was all the more firmly established, and his employer had now a higher regard for him than ever.

The straightforwardness of the man appears in the following incident, related at the time, in a letter to Mr. Wesley, in which he gives an account of his arrest at Nottingham, and of his being brought before the alderman for examination:—

"I wonder you cannot stay at home," said his honor. "You see the mob wont suffer you to preach in this town."

"I did not know this town was governed by the mob; most towns are governed by the magistrates," he replied.

"What! do you expect us to take your part, when you take the people from their work?" said the alderman.



"Sir, you are wrongly informed," said Nelson; "we preach at five in the morning and at seven at night, and these are the hours when most people are in their beds in the morning, and at night either at the play or at the ale-house."

"I believe you are the cause of all the evil that has fallen upon the nation," said the alderman.

"What reason have you to believe so? Can you prove that one Methodist in England did assist the rebels with either men, money, or arms?"

"No," was the reply; "but it has been observed that there has always been such a people before any great evil fall on the land."

"It hath been as you say," answered John; "but that people was not the cause of the evil any more than we are at this time. But these mobbers, and swearers, and drunkards, and whoremongers, and extortioners, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God—these are the cause why God afflicteth both man and beast, not we. We are sent to persuade them to break off their sins by repentance, that the heavy judgments of God may not consume such a people. And if there be not a general reformation, God will be avenged of such a nation as this."

The remainder of his remarks he does not record. But he says, "I opened my mouth, and I did not cease to set life and death before him;" at which the poor magistrate began to shake, and the constable, seeing the pass to which things were likely to come, began to be uneasy, and inquired what he should do with him.

"I think you must take him to your house," said the alderman, who was now intent on saving Nelson from further violence. But when the constable declined the honor, the justice said, "You may go where you came from;" whereupon he ordered the constable to take the preacher to the house from which he had taken him, and to see that the mob did him no harm; which was a great mortification to the constable and a great delight to the preacher.

This stalwart Methodist was the comrade of Wesley in one of his preaching tours through the county of Cornwall, of which he gives the following lively account:—

"All this time Mr. Wesley and I lay on the floor; he had my great-coat for his pillow, and I had Burkitt's 'Notes on the New



Testament' for mine. After being here nearly three weeks, one morning, about three o'clock, Mr. Wesley turned over, and finding me awake, clapped me on the side, saying, 'Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer; I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but one side.' We usually preached on the commons, going from one common to another, and it was but seldom any one asked us to eat or drink. One day we had been at St. Hilary Downs, where Mr. Wesley preached from Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, and there was a shaking among the people while he preached. As we returned Mr. Wesley



AN INHOSPITABLE COUNTRY.

stopped his horse to pick the blackberries, saying, 'Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries, for this is the best country I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst that ever I saw for getting food.' "

After this Nelson traveled about the country, working at his trade by day and preaching by night, and by his tact and spirit proving himself more than a match for his adversaries, who often became his admiring friends. His adventures form a delightful little history of



themselves, and his published Journal shows him to have been a man of extraordinary power. On one occasion he preached at Grimsby, where the parish clergyman had hired a man to beat the town drum, and the drummer and the parson marched the streets, gathering the rabble together, and treating them to liquor, the better to prepare them to go and "fight for the Church," which meant, to break up the Methodist meetings; but the preaching of Nelson was so unexpectedly pleasing to the mob that it kept them in decent behavior until the sermon was over, and then, instead of damaging the people as they came out of the chapel, the mob began to fight with one another; thus the preacher and his hearers got safely off.

The next day the clergyman, with his noisy lieutenant, repeated the experiment, but when the man of the drum came within the sound of Nelson's eloquence it had such a wonderful effect upon him that, instead of drowning the sermon with noise, the sermon was likely to drown him with tears, for the poor fellow stood listening while the tears ran down his cheeks, and forgot all about the purpose for which his reverend ally had brought him to the preaching.

At a place called Pudsey, where the people were afraid to admit him to their houses, having heard that the constables were searching for him, Nelson preached sitting upon his horse in the street. From this he passed on to Leeds, where he remained for some time, hewing stone by day and preaching every night; a double work at which his labors were so blessed that the Methodists of Leeds boast of him as their special founder and apostle.

**Nelson Impressed for a Soldier.**—On reaching home at Birstal, after this notable preaching tour, he was warned of a plot against him. The ale-house keepers had complained of a loss of their customers in consequence of his preaching, and the parish clergyman was jealous of his eloquence; these two, therefore, joined together to have Nelson arrested as a vagrant, on which charge, if sustained, he might be forced into the King's service. His examination before the magistrate at Halifax, who was himself the Vicar of the parish, was the very height of absurdity considered as a process of law; and, refusing to hear any evidence in his defense, this clerical court ordered him to a vile and filthy dungeon at Bradford, in which miserable place, with no food except such as was brought him



in charity, and with no other bed than a heap of straw, the brave fellow was held a prisoner in the King's name for no other offense than that of being too good a preacher to suit the cupidity of the publican and the jealousy of the parson.

Nelson's wife came to see him in this wretched den, and through a hole in the door she exhorted him thus :—

"Fear not ; the cause is God's for which you are here, and he will plead it himself. Be not concerned about me and the children, for he that feeds the young ravens will take care of us."

"I cannot fear either man or the devil," answered the brave fellow, "so long as I find the love of God as I now do."

The next day he was sent to Leeds, where multitudes flocked to see him, and hundreds of people stood in the streets and looked at him through the iron gate of his prison, where at night a hundred persons met him and joined him in the worship of God. From Leeds he was marched off to York, a violent anti-Methodist region, and as he was brought into the town under a guard of soldiers the streets and the windows were filled with people, who shouted after him as if he had been a pirate. But he says, in his account of the occasion, "The Lord made my brow like brass, so that I could look upon them as grasshoppers, and pass through the street as if there had been none in it but God and me."

While waiting at York for a chance of active soldiering Nelson was put on his course of training for that new profession ; but when he was ordered to parade, the corporal who was commanded to gird him with his military trappings trembled as if he had the palsy. Nelson said he would wear these things as a cross, but would not fight, as it was not agreeable to his conscience, and he would not harm his conscience for any man on earth. Whenever he had an opportunity he was sure to exercise his gifts as a preacher, and so great became the terror of his word among the officers and soldiers that they feared to continue the abusive treatment which he had at first received, and before long he was allowed the same privileges as any other soldier, which he straightway began to use by preaching in the streets and fields. He was at last released by the influence of Lady Huntingdon, after having been marched about the country with his regiment for about three months, during which time he had endured



## STORMY DAYS FOR METHODISM.

hardness as a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ, though as a soldier of His Majesty, King George, he was a most conspicuous failure.

Maxfield also had a taste of soldiering the following year, but Wesley was always on the watch, and if any harm came to his helpers he was speedily making efforts in their behalf, and thus the King's armies gained very little from the Methodist preachers. These men would not fight, but no terror could prevent them from preaching and praying. No wonder that Wesley was proud of such helpers. They were men after his own heart; so full of the fear of God that they had no room in them for any other kind of fear.

The item of legal expense is a large one in Mr. Wesley's accounts for not only did he invoke the law for the protection of himself, his preachers, and his people, at his own cost, but he also caused large sums of money to be raised in the Societies to pay the infamous fines and ransoms which were laid on the heads of his co-laborers, thus giving the people a sense of partnership in the hardships as well as in the ministry of the itinerants, and adding not a little to their dignity and power; since he must be a very poor preacher indeed who could not command the attention of a congregation, when, for the sake of preaching the Gospel to them, he had suffered the loss of all things, and was actually carrying his life in his hands.





"PARSON" BUTLER'S ATTACK ON THE METHODIST CHAPEL AT CORK.

## CHAPTER X.

### "FIGHTINGS WITHOUT AND FEARS WITHIN."

**The First Methodist Conference.**—It was in the midst of these stormy times, perhaps because of them, that Wesley convened his first Conference at the Old Foundry, in London, on the 25th of June, 1744. It was simply a meeting of the two Wesleys with four of their friends from among the English clergy, and four lay preachers, who came together at Mr. Wesley's invitation to give him their advice "respecting the best method of carrying on the work." The following is the conference roll:—

Rev. JOHN WESLEY, A.M.

Rev. CHARLES WESLEY.

Rev. JOHN HODGES, Rector of Wenvo.

Rev. HENRY PIERS, Vicar of Bexley.

Rev. SAMUEL TAYLOR, Vicar of Quinton.



**Rev. JOHN MERITON**, a clergyman from the Isle of Man.

**THOMAS MAXFIELD**, Lay Preacher.

THOMAS RICHARDS, “ “

JOHN BENNETT, “ “

JOHN DOWNES, “ “

Of the four clerical members of this small but memorable council who ventured to accept Mr. Wesley's invitation, Hodges was a Welsh minister who had often accompanied the Wesleys in their preaching tour through that principality. Piers was a convert and fellow-laborer of Charles Wesley. Taylor, the Vicar of Quinton, in Gloucestershire, was himself a notable evangelist, with some of the old English martyr blood in him, who, like Wesley, was accustomed to go out into the highways and hedges in the name of the Lord, and who also bore his share of persecution. Meriton had been educated in one of the Universities, and was now a clergyman in the Isle of Man. The last years of his life seem to have been chiefly spent in accompanying the Wesleys on their preaching excursions, and in assisting them in the chapels they had built. Of the four lay members of this first Conference three afterward left Mr. Wesley and became ministers of other Churches; John Downes being the only one who lived and died a Methodist.

The day before the Conference commenced was a memorable one. Besides the ordinary preaching service, a love-feast was held at the Old Foundry, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to the whole of the London Society, now numbering between two and three thousand members; at which sacramental service five clergymen assisted. On the day following the Conference was opened with prayer, a sermon by Charles Wesley, and the baptism of an adult, who then and there found peace with God.

No mere dogmatic questions were raised, but the Conference confined its attention to these three points, namely: 1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. 3. How to regulate doctrine, discipline, and practice. "It is desired," said these good men, "that every thing be considered as in the immediate presence of God; that we may meet with a single eye, and as little children who have every thing to learn; that every point may be examined from the foundation; that every person may speak freely what is in his heart, and



that every question proposed may be freely debated, and 'bolted to the bran.'"

The form of question, which has ever since been retained in the Minutes of the British Conference, because of its manifest simplicity and directness, was here first used. Some of these questions and answers are worthy of frequent repetition, as, for instance:—

Q. "How far does each agree to submit to the unanimous judgment of the rest?"

A. "In speculative things each can only submit so far as his judgment shall be convinced; in every practical point, so far as we can without wounding our several consciences."

Q. "Should we be fearful of thoroughly debating every question which may arise?"

A. "What are we afraid of? Of overturning our first principles? If they are false, the sooner they are overturned the better. If they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. Let us all pray for a willingness to receive light to know every doctrine whether it be of God."

Q. "How far is it our duty to obey the Bishops?"

A. "In all things indifferent, and on this ground of obeying them we should observe the canons as far as we can with a safe conscience."

The general answer to the question of "How to preach?" was:—

"1. To invite. 2. To convince. 3. To offer Christ. Lastly, to build up. And to do this in some measure in every sermon."

It was also agreed that lay assistants, of which there were now about forty, were allowable only in cases of necessity. They were to expound every morning and evening; to meet the united bands, or private societies within Societies, and the penitents once a week; to visit the classes once a quarter; to hear and decide all controversies; to put the disorderly back on trial, and to receive on trial for the bands of Society; to see that the stewards, the leaders, school-masters, and house-keepers, faithfully discharged their several offices; and to meet the leaders and stewards weekly, and to examine their accounts. They were to be serious; to converse sparingly and cautiously with women, taking no step toward marriage without first acquainting Mr. Wesley or his brother clergymen, and to do nothing "as a gentleman,"



for they had "no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing-master."

They were to be ashamed of nothing but sin. They were to take no money of any one, and were to contract no debts without Wesley's knowledge; they were not to mend the rules, but to keep them; they were to employ their time as Wesley directed, and to keep journals, as well for Wesley's satisfaction as for their own profit.

It was agreed, also, that it was lawful for Methodists to bear arms, and they might use the law as defendants, and perhaps in some cases as plaintiffs. They were to meet the children in every place, and give them suitable exhortations; they were to preach expressly and strongly against Sabbath-breaking, dram-drinking, evil speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, expensiveness or gayety of apparel, and against contracting debts without sufficient care to discharge them. They were to recommend to every Society, frequently and earnestly, the books of Wesley as being preferable to any other; they were also to use their best endeavors to extirpate smuggling, and by all means to prove themselves loyal subjects both of the Church and of the King. As often as possible they were to rise at four o'clock; to spend two or three minutes every hour in earnest prayer; to observe strictly the morning and evening hour of retirement; to rarely employ above an hour at a time in conversation; to use all the means of grace; to keep watch-nights once a month; to take a regular catalogue of the Societies once a year; to speak freely to each other, and never to part without prayer. They were never to preach more than twice a day unless on Sundays or extraordinary occasions; to begin and end the service precisely at the time appointed; to always suit their subject to their congregations; to choose the plainest texts possible, and to beware of allegorizing and rambling from their texts. They were to avoid every thing awkward or affected, either in phrase, gesture, or pronunciation; to sing no hymns of their own composing; to choose hymns proper for the congregation; not to sing more than five or six verses at a time, to suit the tune to the nature of the hymns. After preaching, they were recommended to take lemonade, candied orange peel, or a little soft warm ale; and to avoid late suppers, and egg and wine, as downright poison.

Some of these directions are sufficiently familiar to those who have



had the good fortune to be present at a conference during the reception of ministers into the traveling connection. The "warm ale" and "orange peel" have, indeed, disappeared, but the weightier matters of advice in doctrine and practice still stand in the Discipline which governs, or is supposed to govern, nearly twenty-five thousand Methodist clergy.

The body of lay Methodist preachers for whose benefit these regulations were laid down were good and true men, soundly converted, who believed with all their hearts in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in their individual call to his ministry. In those days there was enough hardship in the life of a Methodist preacher to keep all common men away; nevertheless there were streaks of human nature, rather broad ones sometimes, in the character of these heroes, on account of which many of them fell out of the ranks after a short period of service. A few of them, from time to time, succeeded in attaining their darling ambition, an ordination and a parish in the Established Church; others were silenced by the pressure of prosperity, others by insufferable trials and privations; some drifted away into the Moravian Church; some found a snug situation in Lady Huntingdon's Connection along with their old friend Whitefield; and others still, chafing under the severity of the rules, and of the almost military strictness with which Mr. Wesley enforced them, quarreled with their great leader, and set up preaching for themselves. But their places were more than filled by new recruits, and the great revival movement progressed with wonderful rapidity.

**Wesley's Churchmanship.**—The number of friends and helpers among the English clergy was always very small, nor did it increase in the ratio of the increase of the popular success of the Methodist movement. This was a source of great anxiety to Mr. Wesley, who had not yet been delivered from the bondage of ecclesiastical traditions, and who, by the peculiarity of his position, was sometimes led to look narrowly at the bars of his churchly prison to see if some of them were not loose in their sockets, and so might be removed to give him egress when he would go out, and ingress when he desired to be found within; for on no account would he make use of the door of dissent, which would have opened widely enough to let him out, but which would be barred and bolted



against his return. The state of his mind at this time is indicated in one of his letters, in which he says, "We will obey all the laws of that Church (such as we allow the rubrics to be, but not the customs of the ecclesiastical courts) so far as we can with a safe conscience; and with the same restriction we will obey the Bishops, as executors of those laws; but their bare will, distinct from those laws, we do not profess to obey at all. Field preaching is contrary to no law which we profess to obey; nor are we clear that the allowing lay preachers is contrary to any such law. But if it is, this is one of the exempt cases: one wherein we cannot obey with a safe conscience."

The question, "Shall we leave the Established Church?" continually occurs in the Minutes of his Annual Conferences, as if to indicate that it was constantly pressed upon his attention as a means of relieving himself and his friends from the difficulties of their situation. But the oft-repeated answer is, No, No, NO! given with more or less of argument and explanation, and sometimes with a leaning toward a larger liberty. Thus at the third day's session of the Conference of 1745 the question was asked:

"Is Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Independent Church government most agreeable to reason?"

The answer was, "A preacher preaches and forms an independent congregation; he then forms another and another in the immediate vicinity of the first; this obliges him to appoint deacons, who look on the first pastor as their common father; and as these congregations increase, and as their deacons grow in years and grace, they need other subordinate deacons, or helpers; in respect of whom they are called presbyters, or elders; as their father in the Lord may be called the bishop, or overseer of them all."

The next year the famous work of Lord King, afterward Lord High Chancellor of England, fell into his hands, entitled, "An Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church, that flourished Three Hundred Years after Christ; Faithfully Collected out of the extant Writings of those Ages."

King was a Dissenter; and the chief object of his learned work was to prepare the way for that comprehension of the Dissenters within the pale of the Established Church which the Revolution of 1688 was supposed likely to accomplish. The effect upon Wesley's



mind of this learned attack on the ecclesiastical pretensions of the clergy of the Church of Rome and of England was to demolish the fiction of an unbroken succession of bishops as a third order of the ministry ordained by Christ and descended from the apostles. After reading it he says: "In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draught; but if so, it would follow that bishops and presbyters are (essentially) of one order, and that originally every Christian congregation was a Church independent of all others."

He further expresses his modified views in the Minutes of the Conference of 1747, in which the following questions and answers occur:—

Q. Does a Church in the New Testament always mean a single congregation?

A. We believe it does. We do not recollect any instance to the contrary.

Q. What instance or ground is there, then, in the New Testament, for a *national* Church?

A. We know none at all. We apprehend it to be a merely political institution.

Q. Are the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons plainly described in the New Testament?

A. We think they are; and believe they generally obtained in the Churches of the apostolic age.

Q. But are you assured that God designed the same plan should obtain in all Churches, throughout all ages?

A. We are not assured of this; because we do not know that it is asserted in Holy Writ.

Q. If this plan were essential to a Christian Church, what must become of all the foreign Reformed Churches?

A. It would follow, that they are no parts of the Church of Christ—a consequence full of shocking absurdity.

Q. In what age was the divine right of episcopacy first asserted in England?

A. About the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Till then all the bishops and clergy in England continually allowed, and joined in, the ministrations of those who were not specially ordained.

Q. Must there not be numberless accidental varieties in the government of various Churches?

A. There must, in the nature of things. For, as God variously dispenses his gifts of nature, providence, and grace, both the offices themselves and the officers in each, ought to be varied from time to time.

Q. Why is it that there is no determinate plan of Church government appointed in Scripture?



A. Without doubt, because the wisdom of God had a regard to this necessary variety.

Q. Was there any thought of uniformity in the government of all Churches until the time of Constantine ?

A. It is certain that there was not; and would not have been then had men consulted the word of God only.

**Early Methodist Preaching-Houses.** — The original Methodists were not fastidious in their architectural tastes. A large barn was, in their judgment, preferable to a small parlor or chapel; and rather than measure their labors by the capacity of a fine church, they preferred to address the multitude in the market-place or in the fields.

On the 7th of May, 1747, Mr. Wesley paid his first visit to Manchester, where a few young men had formed themselves into a Society, rented a room, and written a letter desiring to be admitted to the Methodist fraternity. This preaching-room was in the garret of a three-story house which overhung the river, and whose ground floor was a joiner's shop. The middle story was occupied as a residence, and a part of the garret was also the home of a poor woman who plied her spinning-wheel in one corner while her husband worked his loom in another. A third corner was occupied as a bunker for coals, and in the fourth the young men held their services.

The Nottingham Society for many years held its meetings in the residence of one of its members named Matthew Bagshaw, which place was ingeniously fitted up to serve this double purpose. The largest room on the first floor being too small for the congregation, the bed-room overhead was made to connect with it by means of a large trap-door in the ceiling, and the preacher, mounted on a chair which was perched on a table, could command his hearers above as well as below. But this was elegant compared with some of the regular churches in Wales, one of which Mr. Wesley mentions as not having a glass window belonging to it, but only boards with holes bored here and there, through which the dim light glimmered; while some of the Irish sanctuaries were even more simple, being wholly built of mud and straw, with the exception of a few rough beams required to support the thatch.

**Methodism Carried into Ireland.**—In the summer of 1746 Thomas Williams, one of Wesley's itinerant preachers, made



his appearance in the city of Dublin, where, by his pleasing manners and good address, as well as by his sound doctrine and zeal for God, he gathered a little Society, and then sent for his chief to come and



A DOUBLE-DECKED MEETING-HOUSE.

visit it. Wesley complied at his earliest convenience, and landed in Dublin on Sunday morning, August 9th, of the same year.



The welcome he received from all sorts and conditions of men, including even His Grace the Archbishop, led Mr. Wesley to write:—

“For natural sweetness of temper, for courtesy and hospitality, I have never seen any people like the Irish. Indeed, all I conversed with were only English transplanted into another soil, and they are much mended by the removal, having left all their roughness and surliness behind them.

“At least ninety-nine in a hundred of the native Irish remain in the religion of their forefathers. The Protestants, whether in Dublin or elsewhere, are almost all transplanted from England. Nor is it any wonder that those who are born Papists generally live and die such, when the Protestants can find no better ways to convert them than penal laws and acts of Parliament.”

It is proverbially dangerous to form a judgment from first appearances. To the end of his life Mr. Wesley exceedingly delighted in Ireland and the Irish, among whom he was always received on his numerous visits with the greatest cordiality and honor; but many of his preachers had a very different story to tell concerning their experiences in preaching the Gospel to these “transplanted English,” who, as they discovered, had not left all their “roughness and surliness” behind them.

On Wesley's return to England his brother Charles, with Charles Perronet, one of Wesley's clerical helpers, took charge of the Dublin Society, for whose use their chief had secured a chapel in Marlborough-street; but in an evil day the uncomfortable John Cennick, who had now become as weary of Whitefield as he formerly was of Wesley, and had gone over to the Moravians, made his appearance in the Irish capital, and by his wild attacks on the doctrine of the Papists brought all the Methodists into disrepute. “The courtesy and natural sweetness” of the Irish temper had been overborne by their zeal for the Papist religion, and Charles Wesley found that the chapel had been destroyed by the mob, whose shillalaws had not spared the heads of the congregation, and for a time there was no one to be found in Dublin who dared to sell or rent the Methodists a place of worship.

But the Irish temper is like Irish weather, stormy and sunny within the same hour. For awhile Charles Wesley preached at the risk of his life on Oxmantown Green; but the wrath of the mob



quickly cooled down, and in a few weeks he was able to buy a house and fit it up for a preaching place, whose location, with almost Hibernian aptness, he describes in a letter to his brother as "a house near Dolphin's barn."

The results of this were vastly important. Forty-two times Wesley crossed the Irish Channel, and spent, in his different visits, at least half a dozen years of his laborious life in the Emerald Isle. Ire-



HEALEY ON THE ATHLONE CIRCUIT.

land yielded him some of the most eminent of his coadjutors: Thomas Walsh, Adam Clarke, Henry Moore, and others; and Irish men and women were ordained by Providence to carry Methodism into almost every quarter of the globe.

For six months Charles Wesley, Perronet, Healey, and other itinerants, kept the Gospel trumpet sounding, not only in the streets and lanes, but also among the bogs and mountains.

They made an excursion to Tyrrell's Pass, and from among



proverbial swearers, drunkards, thieves, and Sabbath-breakers, formed a Society of nearly one hundred persons. At Athlone a gang of ruffians knocked Jonathan Healey off his horse, beat him with a club, and were about to murder him with a knife, when a poor woman from a hut came to his assistance, and for her interference was half killed with a blow from a heavy whip. The hedges were all lined with Papists, but the dragoons came out, the mob fled, Healey was rescued, and taken into the woman's cabin, where Charles Wesley found him in his blood, and attended to his wounds. A crowd of above two thousand having assembled in the market, Charles Wesley preached to them from the window of a ruined house with good effect, and then the knot of brave-hearted Methodists marched to the field of battle, stained with Healey's blood, and sang a song of triumph and of praise to God.

On the return of the elder Wesley to Ireland in the spring of 1748 he found a Society in Dublin of nearly four hundred members. A wide circuit had been organized, including Athlone, Tullamore, Birr, Aughrim, Ballymote, Castlebar, Sligo, and Cooleylough; the last-named being the cathedral town, only there was no cathedral there, the quarterly meetings being held under the hospitable roof of Mr. Handy, an Irish Methodist gentleman of the olden time, while preaching might be done in any convenient place under the shelter of the sky.

For four or five years the Dublin Methodists worshiped in "the house near Dolphin's barn," till an elegant chapel was erected for them in Whitefriar-street, in the year 1752.

**Methodism in Cork.**—The city of Cork, especially at that day, was not a very safe place for a Methodist preacher; but when John Wesley was planned the element of fear was left out of his composition, and therefore he was not afraid to invade that wild Irish city. As he rode through the town he found that his fame had preceded him, for the people crowded to the doors and windows of their houses to catch a glimpse of the arch-Methodist as he passed. Their evident temper was such that he judged it best not to call such a crowd together until he had further studied the situation; so he rode straight through the city, and preached first at the Protestant town of Bandon, and afterward at Blarney, where the ridiculous report was spread abroad that the Methodists believed that religion consisted in



wearing long whiskers! What the Methodist women did to be saved they did not undertake to explain.

A small Society had already been formed in Cork, which went on peaceably enough till the clergy and the town corporation started a persecution against them. A strolling ballad-singer, named Butler, was engaged to lead the anti-Methodist mob, and this despicable fellow, dressed in a parson's gown and bands, with a Bible in one hand, and a collection of lampooning rhymes in the other, paraded the streets, singing and peddling the most outrageous and ridiculous slanders against Wesley and his followers. The next step was to attack the Society as they were coming out of their place of meeting. Mud, stones, and clubs were used against them with genuine Irish freedom and vigor, and when some of the wounded ones fled back into the preaching-house for shelter, two sheriffs of the city came upon the scene, turned them out again into the midst of their assailants, and locked the doors of their own chapel against them.

Butler and his gang amused themselves daily and nightly by maltreating the Methodists, breaking their windows, and spoiling their goods, the Mayor of the city himself being sometimes a silent spectator, and refusing to interfere to preserve the peace. Every day for a fortnight the mob gathered in front of the house of David Sullivan, and threatened to pull it down, and he at length applied to the Mayor for protection.

"It is your own fault for entertaining those preachers," answered the Mayor; whereupon the mob set up a loud huzza, and threw stones faster than ever.

"This is fine usage under a Protestant government," said Sullivan. "If I had a priest saying mass in my house it would not be touched."

The Mayor replied, "The priests are tolerated, but you are not;" and the crowd, thus encouraged, continued throwing stones till midnight.

On May 31, 1749, the day that Wesley passed through Cork, Butler and his friends assembled at the chapel, and beat and bruised and cut the congregation most fearfully. The rioters burst open the chapel doors; tore up the pews, the benches, and the floor, and burned them in the open street. Having demolished the chapel, Butler and his



gang of ruffians went from street to street, and from house to house, abusing, threatening, and maltreating the Methodists at their pleasure, some of the women narrowly escaping with their lives. [See heading of Chapter X.] For two months these horrible outrages were continued; and at the end of that period Wesley writes: "It was not for those who had any regard either to their persons or goods to oppose Mr. Butler after this. So the poor people patiently suffered whatever he and his mob were pleased to inflict upon them."

Twenty-eight presentments were made against Butler and his crew before the Grand Jury of the Cork Assizes, but they were all thrown out, while the same jury made a presentment declaring that Charles Wesley, and seven other Methodist preachers therein named, together with Daniel Sullivan, were all persons of ill fame, vagabonds, and common disturbers of His Majesty's peace, and ought to be transported. This, of course, gave Butler greater license than ever. His fiendish persecutions had now received a semi-official sanction, and were carried on with the greatest gusto. The farce of a trial of six Irish Methodist itinerants for vagabondage, and disturbing the peace, was afterward attempted at Cork, with the infamous Butler as chief witness against them, but the judge declared that it was an insult to the court to bring such a case and such a witness before him.

One of the rabble died shortly afterward, and was buried in a coffin made of two of the benches which he had stolen from the Methodist meeting-house; while the notorious Butler went first to Waterford, where, in another riot, he lost an arm, and then fled to Dublin, where he dragged out the remainder of his life in misery, and was actually saved from starving by the charity of the Dublin Methodists.

The next year Wesley again risked life and limb among these semi-savages of Cork, who burned him in effigy, and broke the windows, as well as the heads, of quite a number of his congregation. On this occasion one of the leaders of the mob was a drunken clergyman, who, when Wesley was preaching at Bandon, got up beside him, flourished his shillalah, and gave the signal for an attack; but his reverence was too drunk to be an effective leader, and three women of the congregation pulled him down and carried him off, leaving the preacher to go on with his discourse in peace.



In spite of the dangers which he and his friends encountered among them, Wesley still loved the Irish people, and visited their Societies almost every year. In his Journal he relates some of his most striking experiences among them. For instance :—

At Aymo, where he wished to sleep, the woman who kept the inn refused him admittance, and, moreover, let loose four dogs to worry him.

At Portarlinton he had the unthankful task of reconciling the differences of two termagant women, who talked for three hours, and grew warmer and warmer, till they were almost distracted. Wesley says: "I perceived there was no remedy but prayer; so a few of us wrestled with God for above two hours." The result was, after three hours of scolding and two hours of praying, anger gave place to love, and the quarrelsome ladies fell upon each other's neck and wept.

At Tullamore many of his congregation were drunk; but the bulk paid great attention. He rebuked the Society for their lukewarmness and covetousness; and had the pleasure of seeing them evince signs of penitence.

At Tyrrell's Pass he found a great part of the Society "walking in the light, and praising God all the day long."

At Cooleylough he preached to backsliders. In the midst of the service at Athlone a man passed by on a fine prancing horse, which drew off a large part of the congregation. Wesley paused, and then, raising his voice, said, "If there are any more of you who think it is of more concern to see a dancing horse than to hear the Gospel of Christ, pray go after them." The renegades heard the rebuke, and the majority at once returned.

It so happened that at the time of Wesley's visit to Rathcormuck there was an Irish funeral. An immense crowd of people had assembled to do honor to the dead; a part of the burial service was read in the church, after which Wesley preached; and, as soon as his discourse was ended, the customary Irish howl was given. Wesley writes: "It was not a song, but a dismal, inarticulate yell, set up at the grave by four shrill-voiced women, who were hired for that purpose. But I saw not one that shed a tear; for that, it seems, was not in their bargain."

In 1752 Wesley paid another visit to the Green Isle, accompa-



nied by Thomas Walsh, who was possessed of the rare accomplishment of being able to preach in the Irish language. At this time steps were taken to erect a Methodist house in Cork, and four years later Wesley, after preaching in it, says it was in every way the equal of the Dublin house, and built for two hundred pounds less money.

The first Irish Conference was held at Limerick, on the 14th and 15th of August, 1752, at which there were ten preachers in attendance, and where six others were admitted; among whom was Philip Guier, one of a company of German refugees called Palatines,\* which had settled in the neighborhood of Ballingran about forty years before. He was the master of the German school at Ballingran; and it was in his school that Philip Embury (subsequently the founder of Methodism in the United States, now a young man thirty-two years of age) had been taught to read and write. By means of Guier, also, the devoted Thomas Walsh, of the same age as Embury, had been enlightened and prepared to receive the truth as it is in Jesus. Philip Guier was made the leader of the infant Society at Limerick, and now, in 1752, was appointed to act as a local preacher among the Palatines. He still kept his school, but devoted his spare hours to preaching. The people loved the man, and sent him flour, oatmeal, bacon, and potatoes, so that Philip, if not rich, was not in want.

The Irish itinerants were to be allowed £8 at least, and if possible £10 a year for clothing; and £10 a year were to be allowed for the support of each preacher's wife. The preachers were to preach frequently and strongly on fasting; and were to practice it every Friday, health permitting. Next to luxury they were to avoid idleness, and to spend one hour every day in private prayer.

It is a remarkable fact that after the lapse of a hundred years the name of Philip Guier is as fresh in Ballingran as it ever was; and still the Papists, as well as Protestants, are accustomed to salute the Methodist minister as he jogs along on his circuit horse, and say, "There goes Philip Guier, who drove the devil out of Ballingran!"

\* The Palatinate, now included in Bavaria, was a small section of country governed by a "Count Palatine," a title signifying "officer of the palace." These petty princes date back to the fifteenth century, when the first of their hereditary line, who was an officer in the palace of one of the German Emperors, received the gift of this little duchy from his imperial master. The Irish Palatines were exiles for the sake of their Reformed faith, having fled from their native country to escape from Papal persecution.



**Wesley as a Disciplinarian.**—Perhaps no single utterance of John Wesley so well serves to set forth his idea of his power over the itinerant preachers, as the following extract from one of his letters to Edward Perronet, in 1750. He was evidently in a disturbed frame of mind over the action of the Society at Cork, to which he refers; for one of the things he especially hated was the idea of separation from the Established Church. Edward Perronet had a brother, Charles. The italics are Wesley's own:—

"I have abundance of complaints to make, as well as to hear. I have scarce any one on whom I can depend when I am a hundred miles off. 'Tis well if I do not run away soon, and leave them to cut and shuffle for themselves. Here [in Ireland] is a glorious people; but O! where are the shepherds? The Society at Cork have fairly sent me word that they will take care of themselves, and erect themselves into a Dissenting congregation. I am weary of these sons of



Zeruah: they are too hard for me. Charles and you *behave* as I want you to do; but you cannot, or will not, preach *where* I desire. Others can and will preach *where* I desire, but they do not *behave* as I want them to do. I have a fine time between the one and the other. I think both Charles and you have, in the general, a right sense of what it is to serve as sons in the gospel; and if all our helpers had had the same the work of God would have prospered better, both in England and Ireland. I have not one preacher with me, and not six in England, whose wills are broken to serve me thus."

"Whose wills are broken to serve me." Surely no ecclesiastical superior ever expressed himself with more clearness and force. Though not claiming now to be a bishop, John Wesley was an apt scholar in the use of the crozier, and it was not long before he also learned how to handle the ecclesiastical sword.



**Wesley's Money Matters.**—An account of Mr. Wesley's labors and productions as Editor, Author, and Publisher will be given elsewhere, but it is well to notice here his defense of himself against the charge that he was carrying on his great work with a view to making money. This defense was published in 1743, in reply to a report which had been circulated that he enjoyed an income from the Foundry Society alone of thirteen hundred pounds a year over and above what he received from the Societies at Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle, and other places. He declares that the money given by the Methodists never comes into his hands at all, but is received and expended by the stewards in the relief of the poor, the purchase, erection, and repair of chapels; and that so far from there being any overplus left for himself, he had borrowed and contributed on his own account some six hundred and fifty pounds for the preaching houses in London, Bristol, and Newcastle. Then, addressing himself to his clerical brethren, he asks:—

“For what price will you preach eighteen or nineteen times every week; and this throughout the year? What shall I give you to travel seven or eight hundred miles, in all weathers, every two or three months? For what salary will you abstain from all other diversions than the doing good and the praising God? I am mistaken if you would not prefer strangling to such a life, even with thousands of gold and silver. As to gold and silver, I count it dung and dross; I trample it under my feet; I esteem it just as the mire of the streets. I desire it not; I seek it not; I only fear lest any of it should cleave to me, and I should not be able to shake it off before my spirit returns to God. I will take care (God being my helper) that none of the accursed thing shall be found in my tents when the Lord calleth me hence. Hear ye this, all you who have discovered the treasures which I am to leave behind me; if I leave behind me ten pounds—above my debts and my books, or what may happen to be due on account of them—you and all mankind bear witness against me, that I lived and died a thief and a robber.”

Many years afterward Wesley “became rich unawares,” by the immense circulation of his books and tracts among the ever-increasing multitudes of his followers and friends; but he treated himself as a servant of his own establishment, and only allowed himself “thirty



pounds a year, and an occasional suit of clothes" out of the income of his London Publishing House; the rest, above his traveling expenses, he gave away—some to the support of his brother Charles, in addition to his proper share of the income from the sale of the hymn books; some to relieve the necessities of his widowed or unhappily married sisters; some to help his lay preachers, who without his aid could have hardly kept soul and body together; a large amount to build the London school and preaching-houses; and the rest he poured out in a ceaseless stream of alms and benefactions to the poor and unfortunate whom he met day by day.

**The Foundry Bank.**—In 1747 Mr. Wesley established a kind of bank at the Foundry, which he called a "Lending Society." This institution commenced business on a capital of fifty pounds, which Mr. Wesley had begged among his friends in London, and lodged in the hands of the stewards, who held a meeting every Tuesday morning for the purpose of loaning to approved persons small amounts not to exceed twenty shillings, on condition that the loan should be repaid within three months. This charitable loan fund soon became popular: the capital was increased to one hundred and twenty pounds, and the maximum loan to five pounds; and by its means hundreds of honest poor people were aided in times of special distress, and some who were on the verge of ruin were by this small assistance saved from bankruptcy, and placed again on the road to fortune.

**Wesley as a Medical Man.**—In the year 1746 Mr. Wesley opened his notable Medical Dispensary in London. Having already provided a loan fund for the relief of the poor, his attention was now called to the fact that medicines were expensive, and doctors still more expensive, and having himself some considerable knowledge of the healing art, he offered his services, without money or price, as a curer of the bodies as well as of the souls of people who were too poor to be killed or cured in the regular professional way.

"For six or seven and twenty years," says he, "I had made anatomy and physic the diversion of my leisure hours, though I never properly studied them, unless for a few months when I was going to America." He now took up the study again, and having hired him an apothecary to take charge of his store of drugs, and an experienced



surgeon to attend to the mechanical part of the business, he gave notice thereof to the Society at the Foundry, and in a short time he had a medical "practice" of over a hundred patients a month.

Of course he was branded as a quack by the regular medical profession, but he defended himself by his success, declaring that during the first four months he had cured seventy-one persons of diseases which had long been thought to be incurable, and that out of all his five hundred patients not one had died on his hands.

In a letter to Archbishop Secker in 1747 Mr. Wesley thus defends his irregular medical enterprise; an extract which medical readers will do well to omit, as they will be sure to disagree with its views:—

"For more than twenty years I have had numberless proofs that regular physicians do exceeding little good. From a deep conviction of this, I have believed it my duty, within these four months last past, to prescribe such medicines to six or seven hundred of the poor as I knew were proper for their several disorders. Within six weeks nine in ten of them who had taken these medicines were remarkably altered for the better; and many were cured of disorders under which they had labored for ten, twenty, forty years. Now, ought I to have let one of these poor wretches perish, because I was not a regular physician? to have said, 'I know what will cure you; but I am not of the college; you must send for Dr. —?' Before Dr. — had come in his chariot, the man might have been in his coffin. And when the doctor was come, where was his fee? What! he cannot live upon nothing! So, instead of an orderly cure, the patient dies, and God requires his blood at my hands."

The success of the London dispensary was so great that another was opened at Bristol, with like favorable results. Wesley then tried his hand at medical authorship, and published his book entitled "Primitive Physic," a work which was received with a storm of abuse and ridicule by the medical profession, but which was of no small service in its day.

**Another "Escape from Matrimony."**—It was during this period that Mr. Wesley passed through another stormy experience similar to that in Savannah, which is set down in his biography as "an escape from matrimony." The woman in question—we may as well dismiss this bit of gossip at once—was Grace Murray, a sailor's



widow, who, after a striking conversion, had devoted herself to a religious life in connection with Mr. Wesley's Orphan House at Newcastle, where she occupied herself with teaching, visiting the sick, leading classes of women, and making occasional excursions for a similar purpose among the Societies in the country round.

The Orphan House was also a hospital for sick preachers, several of whom she nursed, and who were greatly charmed with her; especially was this true of one, John Bennett, whom she took care of through a fever of twenty-six weeks' duration. What could be more natural than that these two pious people should become exceedingly fond of one another? But Wesley was known to be opposed to the marriage of his preachers—married preachers were more expensive, besides being much less manageable, than single ones; and when that great man himself began to pay her some attentions the widow was too good a Methodist, and too worldly-wise, withal, to say any thing to him about her other clerical suitor.

It is the fashion with chroniclers of this delicate affair to look at the matter in the interest of the great Methodist man, but this record shall stand in the interest of that charming and talented Methodist woman, who must have been possessed of remarkable "gifts and graces," otherwise the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., Fellow of Lincoln College, the acknowledged head of a great and growing religious body, the personal friend of Lady Huntingdon and other aristocratic persons, would not have been willing to match himself with a person of such humble extraction and condition.

John Bennett was of a very respectable family in Derbyshire, and one of the ablest and best educated men in the Methodist Connection, and a marriage between him and Grace Murray would have been eminently proper if poverty and John Wesley had not stood in the way. But two such stubborn obstacles as these were not to be easily overcome.

Bennett was so devoted to the charming widow that she declared if she were to refuse him she believed he would go mad. Madame Grace, being somewhat experienced in such things, was, like any other sensible widow of a matrimonial turn, intent on securing for herself the best husband she could; and when the General, Bishop—Bennett called him "Pope"—of all the Methodists began to



make love to her, the situation was an exceedingly interesting one, and withal very difficult to manage. If to refuse Bennett would drive him mad, the same treatment might make the other suitor "mad" also. Already the two men had come to hard words about her, and she, like a careful woman, favored the addresses of each in turn.

At length, when the matter had become public, and was likely to do no small damage among the Societies, Charles Wesley, who was also "mad" at the idea of his distinguished brother marrying a woman of such humble antecedents, took the matter in hand, arranged a meeting between the widow and John Bennett, at Bristol, and would not leave town until with his own eyes he had seen this dangerously lovely woman bound hard and fast to Bennett in the holy bonds of matrimony. This marriage occurred October 3, 1749.

It is painfully amusing to read the solemn accounts of this unsuccessful courtship of John Wesley which appear in his various biographies. Mr. Tyerman in his admirable book takes up the rod and lays it heavily upon Bennett and Mrs. Murray, at the same time proffering a handkerchief with which to dry Mr. Wesley's tears. Under the heading of "Who was blamable?" he says:—

"This episode in Wesley's history has been a puzzle to all his biographers. It has never been explained. Mystery has enwrapped it. Readers have been left in doubt who were the parties to be blamed. Now there can be no great difficulty in pronouncing judgment. John Wesley was a dupe. Grace Murray was a flirt. John Bennett was a cheat. Charles Wesley was a sincere, but irritated, impetuous, and officious friend."

Now all this may be very kind to the memory of John Wesley, but it is by no means an exhaustive summing up of the facts. It is also true that John Wesley was a half-way lover, halting between two opinions, wanting the widow very much, but either afraid or ashamed to marry her. He was an avowed old bachelor, forty-six years of age, who had already loved and lost one woman, whom he might have married if he would; or, rather, given her up on the advice of his Moravian friends at Savannah, though when he afterward found how strong a hold this love had taken of his heart he appears to have discarded his officious friends: but then it was too late.

His condition now was greatly changed. He was no longer a poor



missionary to the Indians, among whom he thought to spend his life, that by helping to save their souls he might at length succeed in saving his own, but the head of a large and growing religious fraternity, whose management often required all his patience and sagacity, though he never for one instant lessened his hold of the authority which his providential position gave him. It is evident that in this matter, also, he thought to hold the affections of the lady subject to his own convenience and will; a claim which no man has a right to set up, and which any woman has a right to deny.

Grace Murray was a woman who was seeking to make the best possible disposal of her hand and heart, and who very much desired to marry John Bennett if she could not have John Wesley. She had Bennett's ardent love and Wesley's promise of marriage. After the loss of much valuable time, having now jeopardized her chances of a union with Bennett, she began to grow anxious at Wesley's hesitation, and urged immediate marriage. To this he objected, because he wished—" (1) To satisfy John Bennett; (2) to procure his brother's consent; (3) to send an account of his reasons for marrying to all his preachers and Societies, and to desire their prayers." When, therefore, it became evident that his "brother's consent" could never be obtained, and when all the Methodist Societies were in an uproar about the marriage of their leader with "that woman!" she did the best thing possible under the circumstances, and became Mrs. Bennett without delay.

And now to call Grace Murray "a flirt" is to blame her for not trusting a man who was willing to sacrifice her to his convenience; to say that John Bennett was "a cheat" because he married the woman that Wesley wanted but dared not take, is hardly the cool, historic judgment which might be looked for in such an eminent authority as Tyerman; and to call this "a dishonorable marriage" is to arraign a large proportion of the matrimony of this imperfect world, and thereby discourage that means of grace, of which already there is very much too little.

**Marriage and Separation.**—The writer of this volume gives place to no man in admiration for the admirable qualities of the arch-Methodist; but it is painfully evident that courtship and marriage are among the few subjects which John Wesley did not under-



stand, and it must ever remain one of the regrets of the lovers of Methodist history that its chiefest character makes so poor a figure as a lover and husband. If he had not published to the world his opinions in favor of clerical celibacy the world would have been far more likely to allow his unhappy loves and his disastrous marriage to pass into the realm of things forgotten; but now, like other good men, having in a single instance set up his own opinion against the divine appointment, his folly as well as his wisdom has become immortal.

To the words, "It is not good for man to be alone," he ventured to add—"except for itinerant preachers." He forbade his preachers to marry without his consent—a stretch of spiritual authority which even his own celibate life could hardly excuse; when, therefore, he became the acknowledged suitor for the hand of Grace Murray he actually jeopardized the existence of the Methodist Connection. His preachers noticed the grave inconsistency of his course, and the Methodist sisterhood were in an agony of jealous wrath at the possible elevation of one of their common selves to a seat on the Wesleyan throne. They might have welcomed "a lady" whose rank and excellence could have given her a just pre-eminence; but Wesley's singular ecclesiastical position no doubt prevented his gaining the hand of any well-born and well-bred daughter of the Establishment: he would not marry a Dissenter on any terms: and among the Wesleyan Methodists, now that Lady Huntingdon and her set had separated from them, there were few women to be found who were personally and socially fitted to be his wife.

By his own rule he had made the question of the marriage of a preacher a fit subject to be discussed by his brethren, therefore he could not complain if his own private love affairs were the gossip of the whole Connection. No doubt he felt wounded at the loss of the woman he had intended to marry, but he had no claim to the sentimental condolence of his friends and flatterers; and he proved that his affections were not dangerously damaged by rushing into matrimony some fourteen months afterward with the widow of a London merchant named Vazel, or Vazeille, a person of no education, and who, before her marriage to the merchant, had been a domestic servant.



On Feb. 2, 1751, Mr. Wesley makes this entry in his Journal:—

“For many years I remained single because I believed I could be more useful in a single than in a married state. And I praise God, who enabled me so to do. I now as fully believe that, in my present circumstances, I might be more useful in a married state.” On the same day he wrote to his brother Charles that he was “resolved to marry;” yet four days after, he held a meeting of the single men of the London Society, and showed them on how many accounts it was good for those who had received that gift from God to remain “single for the kingdom of heaven’s sake; unless where a particular case might be an exception to the general rule.”

Four days after this remarkable service, just before he was about to start on his annual preaching tour to Newcastle and vicinity, he slipped on the ice while crossing London Bridge, and sprained his ankle quite severely. A surgeon bound up the leg; and with great difficulty he proceeded to Seven Dials, where he preached. He attempted to preach again, at the Foundry at night; but his sprain became so painful that he was obliged to relinquish his intention, and he at once removed to Threadneedle-street, where Mrs. Vazeille resided; and here he spent the next seven days, “partly,” he says, “in prayer, reading, and *conversation*, and partly in writing a Hebrew grammar and Lessons for Children.”

The accident occurred on Sunday, February 10. On the Sunday following he was “carried to the Foundry, and preached kneeling,” not being yet able to stand; and on the next day, or the day after, cripple though he was, he succeeded in leading Mrs. Vazeille, a widow, seven years younger than himself, to the hymeneal altar. On Monday (February 18) he was still unable to set his foot to the ground. On the Tuesday evening and on the Wednesday morning he preached kneeling, and a fortnight after his marriage, being, as he says, “tolerably able to ride, though not to walk,” he set out for Bristol, leaving his newly married wife behind him.

It was not long before this hasty marriage was followed by leisurely repentance. The husband possessed in a high degree almost every other excellent qualification except such as are essential to happiness in the married state; while the wife, of whom nobody seems to have heard any ill report till she became Mrs. Wesley,



## WESLEY'S MARRIAGE.

was accused of having "an angry and bitter spirit." Jackson, one of Wesley's biographers, says: "Neither in understanding in education was she worthy of the eminent man to whom she was united, and her temper was intolerably bad. During the life of her first husband she appears to have enjoyed every indulgence, and, judging from some of his letters to her, which have been preserved, he paid an entire deference to her will."

John Hampson, who was one of Wesley's confidential friends, and sometimes his traveling companion, calls it a "preposterous union."

The wretched wife was made almost insane with jealousy on account of her husband's official relations with the women who presided over his orphanages at Bristol and Newcastle, and who led his classes of women in the various Societies throughout the kingdom; some of whom had been exceedingly bad characters previous to their conversion. For about two years she traveled with him on his preaching tours, but, not being received with all the honors which she thought due to the wife of John Wesley, she retired from the traveling connection, and stayed at home in London, nursing her wrath by brooding over her imaginary wrongs. Sometimes she would make long secret journeys for the purpose of watching her husband's behavior; and becoming, at length, utterly reckless, she publicly attacked his character by publishing certain of his papers and letters, which were "doctored," and others which were forged, to suit this infamous purpose. She even laid violent hands on her husband, who, as will be remembered, was physically a small, light man, and whose gentleness and patience under what he accepted as his providential chastisement is a feeble and pitiful brightening in this dark matrimonial picture.

The following is an extract from one of his letters to this virago:—

"It might be an unspeakable blessing that you have a husband who knows your temper and can bear with it; who, after you have tried him numberless ways, laid to his charge things that he knew not, robbed him, betrayed his confidence, revealed his secrets, given him a thousand treacherous wounds, purposely aspersed and murdered his character, and made it your *business* so to do, under the poor pretense of vindicating your own character—who, I say, after all these provo-



cations is still willing to forgive you all, to overlook what is past, as if it had not been, and to receive you with open arms; only not while you have a sword in your hand, with which you are continually striking at me, though you cannot hurt me. If, notwithstanding, you continue striking, what can I, what can all reasonable men, think, but that either you are utterly out of your senses, or your eye is not single; that you married me only for my money; that, being disappointed, you were almost always out of humor; and that this laid you open to a thousand suspicions, which, once awakened, could sleep no more?

"My dear Molly, let the time past suffice. As yet the breach may be repaired. You have wronged me much, but not beyond forgiveness. I love you still, and am as clear from all other women as the day I was born. At length know me and know yourself. Your enemy I cannot be; but let me be your friend. Suspect me no more, asperse me no more, provoke me no more. Do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, money, or praise. Be content to be a private insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. Attempt no more to abridge me of my liberty, which I claim by the laws of God and man. Leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience. Then shall I govern you with gentle sway, and show that I do indeed love you, even as Christ the Church."

But it was not Madame Wesley's idea to be governed, even with a "gentle sway," and at length, in 1771, she separated from him, purposing never to return. The next year a peace was patched up between them, but it was only of brief duration, and thereafter they dwelt apart till her death, which occurred in 1781.

In most respects the great leader of "the people called Methodists" was an excellent model, but in all things relative to love and marriage even his greatest admirers can find in his history little else to praise except a forgiving spirit and patience under torture. Great men are sure to have some weakness which in humbler lives might pass unnoticed, but which the very brightness of their virtues throws out into dark and prominent relief, and in this want of manliness in his relations with women appears the one inevitable failing which mars the life and career of John Wesley.

In this connection the inquiry will naturally arise: What became of Bennett and Grace Murray?



## CHARLES WESLEY'S MARRIAGE.

So far as is known their union was a happy one. Bennett broke off all connection with Wesley soon after that event; drew away some of the Bolton Society, and set up a chapel for himself at Warburton, where, after four or five years of ministry, during which he preached the Calvinistic doctrine, he died in great peace May 24, 1759. ] His wife survived him over forty years. Having seen her children settled in life, she rejoined the Methodists at Chapel-en-le-Frith, had a class-meeting in her house, kept a journal of her life after the fashion of Wesley and some of his loving imitators, and on the 23d of February 1808, departed in triumph, in the eighty-seventh year of her age.

**More Matrimony.**—The Wesleyan matrimonial chapter may as well be finished here.

The wife of Charles Wesley was Miss Sarah Gwynne, daughter of a Welsh magistrate, whose house, at Garth, was one of the hospitable halting places of the early itinerant preachers, and where, in 1743, the younger Wesley formed an acquaintance which in six years afterward resulted in marriage.

Under date of April 8, 1749, Mr. Wesley made the following entry in his Journal:—

"*Saturday*, 8. I married my brother and Sarah Gwynne. It was a solemn day, such as became the dignity of a Christian marriage."

This union was in all respects a happy one, though there was a considerable disparity in age, Charles being forty, and his bride only twenty-three. The change from her father's mansion to a small house in Bristol was great; but she loved her husband, and was never known to regret the comforts she had left behind. Of her eight children, most of whom were born after the family removed to London, five died in infancy, three survived their parents, and by their distinguished talent in music added luster to the name of Wesley. Mrs. Charles Wesley died on December 28, 1822, at the age of ninety-six. Her long life was an unbroken scene of devoted piety in its loveliest forms, and her death was calm and beautiful.

**Marriage of George Whitefield.**—While the theme is before us, it may be well to refer to the marriage of the other great Methodist leader, George Whitefield.

When the great preacher visited Northampton, in Massachusetts,



the wife of his reverend friend Dr. Jonathan Edwards, impressed him deeply by her solid excellence and intelligent piety, and he straightway felt impressed that marriage was at once his privilege and duty. He had, no doubt, left behind him in England the lady with whom he was as nearly in love as he ever was with any, and some time afterward he sent her a letter, written on shipboard, addressed to "My dear Miss E.," in which he gravely plunges at once into the question of whether she thinks herself fit to be his wife and the mistress of his Orphan House in Georgia. He advises that she consult the Lord and her other friends about the matter; says he much likes "the manner of Isaac's marrying Rebekah;" calls on the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to witness that he desires to marry her uprightly; says he thinks it his duty to avoid "the passionate expressions which carnal courtiers use;" and then remarks—"If you think marriage will be in any way prejudicial to your better part, be so kind as to send me a denial. I would not be a snare to you for the world."

To the parents of the lady he also wrote a letter in the same religious strain, in which, among other pious things, he says: "You need not to be afraid of sending me a refusal, for, I bless God, if I know any thing of my own heart I am free from that foolish passion which the world calls *love*."

It is not surprising that such wooing by a young man of twenty-five failed of its half-hearted purpose. The next year he was more successful, if success it might be called, in his addresses to a widow about ten years older than himself, whom the enthusiastic young bridegroom describes as "neither rich in fortune nor beautiful as to her person," but one "who has been a housekeeper for many years," who is "a true child of God, and one who would not attempt to hinder me in his work for the world. In that respect I am just the same as before marriage. I hope God will never suffer me to say, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'"

Southey asserts that Whitefield's marriage was not a happy one, and another of his biographers coolly remarks: "He did not intentionally make his wife unhappy. He always preserved great decency and decorum in his conduct toward her. Her death set his mind much at liberty."

Such particulars as these in the biographies of great men are some-



times set forth with apologies, as if their memories were too sacred to be handled with the least approach to familiarity; but it is just such touches as these that make their portraits true to life. Without something of this kind the latent hero-worship in human nature, which is only a more subtle form of idolatry, would take these men from out the realm of history and set them up in the *arcana* of the gods, where they would as effectually rob Jehovah of his rightful glory as do the ancestral shades of China, the classic heroes of Greece, or the patron saints whose statues grace the cathedrals of papal Rome.







*Adam Clarke*

## CHAPTER XI.

### TWO HISTORIC IRISH METHODISTS.

**Adam Clarke.**—This immortal man, so mighty in the Scriptures, so lovable in his private character, and so ardent withal in his love for, and loyalty to, the leader and the principles of the Methodist revival, was born in the village of Moybeg, in the township of Cootinaglugg, in the parish of Kilechronaghan, in the barony of Loughinshaallin, in the County of Londonderry, in the province of Ulster, Ireland, sometime about 1760, though, as the parish clerk failed to enter him in the register of the Church, the exact date of his advent is unknown.



He was a Scotch-Irishman of English descent; the Clarkes having crossed over from England in the seventeenth century, and settled in the region of Carrickfergus, where the great-great-grandfather, William Clarke, was an estated gentleman as well as a sturdy Quaker. The father, John Clarke, M.A., was intended for the Church, but before finishing his final course at Trinity College, Dublin, he became so charmed with a young Scotch lassie that he forsook divinity for matrimony, and began life for himself as a parish school-master.

The mother of Adam Clarke was a descendant of the Laird of Dowart, in the Hebrides, the chief of the clan of the Mac Leans.

In his youth Adam was a stout lad, full of life, and not over fond of his books. He delighted in the wild Irish stories of ghosts and fairies, but for the Latin grammar, and more especially for mathematics, he had a thorough abhorrence. His father had a little bit of land which he cultivated according to the rules laid down by Virgil in the Georgics; and Adam and his brother were employed alternately in work on the farm and helping one another along in the rudiments of classical learning, of which their father was a notable master. His mother was a rigid Presbyterian, and taught him the Catechism of the Westminster Assembly, while his father was an Episcopalian, and taught him the Apostles' Creed—a mixture of doctrine which suited the boy well enough, for he was of a religious turn of mind; but he was in great danger of growing up a dunce in other respects; the only studies to which he would apply himself being the English translation of the Fables of Æsop, Robinson Crusoe, the native fairy literature of Ireland, and the arts of magic, which latter was taught him by a traveling tinker who had strayed into Cootinaglugg.

One day, after being scolded by the master and mocked by his fellow-pupils for his slow progress in his tasks, he declares that in his agony of shame he "felt as if something had broken within him," and, seizing his book, he began to study with a sense of power which was quite a revelation to him, and from that moment he became the wonder of the school.\*

During the year 1777 a Methodist preacher, by the name of John Brettel, began preaching in the neighborhood, in barns, stables, school-houses, and in the open air, and young Clarke, now about seventeen

\* "Life of Adam Clarke," page 58.



years old, was among his most attentive hearers. His father approved the teachings of the itinerant as "the genuine doctrine of the Established Church," while his Presbyterian mother, with equal admiration, declared, "This is the doctrine of the Reformers; this is the true, unadulterated Christianity;" therefore the preacher was made doubly welcome at the school-master's little farm-house, which thenceforth became a "ministers' tavern."

After an awakening and conviction of sin, which was intelligent, protracted, and at the last marked with great agonies of mind, Adam was soundly converted. He was already a well-learned lad, for, though he had been obliged to spend his days on the farm, his nights afforded him time for study; and now that he had found Christ as his personal and present Saviour he straightway began to show him to others. He would often toil from four in the morning till six in the evening, and then walk three or four miles to a Methodist meeting. He also began in earnest to study the Scriptures, and presently to exhort in neighboring villages, sometimes making a circuit of nine or ten hamlets on a single Sunday. He also applied himself with new diligence to the study of mathematics, philosophy, and the languages, thus laying the foundation for that varied and extensive learning in which he ranks with the most eminent of British scholars.

Sometime in the year 1782 one of the preachers of the London-derry Circuit observing the promise of the lad, wrote to Mr. Wesley about him, and Wesley invited him over to the Kingswood School. On the passage from Ireland the vessel was boarded by a press-gang, and young Clarke had a narrow escape from being dragged into His Majesty's navy. The officer seized his hand to feel if it indicated hard work, but found it too white and soft for his liking, and so passed him by as unfit material of which to make a man-of-war's man, and Clarke made his way to the Methodist school.

At this time the Kingswood School was at its worst. In the following year, 1783, Mr. Wesley wrote concerning it: "It must be mended or ended, for no school is better than the present school." Poor Adam, who had arrived at Kingswood with only three half-pence in his pocket, found to his dismay that his coming had not been expected, nor was his stay desired; and so far from being able to profit by the course of instruction, he found himself



too good a scholar already to suit the convenience of his tutor. Being too poor to pay his way he was lodged in a miserable little closet which opened off the chapel, where his scanty allowance of bread and milk was brought to him by a servant; and, still further to his torment, he was compelled by the stewardess to anoint himself all over with sulphur as a safeguard to the institution against a certain cutaneous disease, which, coming from that unknown region called Ireland, it was presumed the young man might have brought over with him.

"And they Scotch people, too!" groans out poor Adam, who had exhibited a cuticle as fair as a baby's, all to no purpose; and who was enduring this treatment as patiently as possible till the great Wesley himself should come.

A piece of good fortune, however, brightened those miserable weeks. One day while digging in the school-house garden—perhaps by way of making himself useful in return for the charity he was receiving—he turned up a bright half-guinea, with which, after vainly trying to find the rightful owner, he bought a Hebrew grammar, and this helped him to lay the foundation for that splendid Oriental learning in which he surpassed all the scholars of his time.

**Ordination of Adam Clarke.**—At length Mr. Wesley arrived at the school—the prison—the house of torture, and having tested the quality of the young Irishman, he said to him:—

"Do you wish to devote yourself entirely to the work of God?"

"I wish to be and do whatever God pleases," was the reply.

Mr. Wesley then laid his hand on the young man's head, and prayed over him; an act which Clarke called his "ordination," and with which he was so fully satisfied that he never sought any other.

A vacancy presently occurring on the Bradford Circuit, he was sent to that work. He was the youngest man in the whole itinerant fraternity, being now only about twenty-two years of age, and of such a youthful and ruddy appearance that he was generally called "the little boy." But it very soon transpired that "the little boy" had the making of a great man. The Bradford Circuit was a four weeks' circuit, comprising thirty-three preaching-places, in as many different towns and villages; wherefore the young recruit was obliged to spend a large part of his time on horseback, and to



preach every day, each time to a new congregation; an arrangement well-suited to the condition of the lad, who speedily acquired the Wesleyan habit of reading in the saddle; and, as one sermon would go a long way, he found ample time for pursuing his other studies.

His success was immediate and brilliant, and at the next Conference, that of 1783, he was admitted to membership without the customary probation. His next field of labor was the Norwich Circuit, on which he preached, in about eleven months, four hundred and fifty sermons, besides exhortations innumerable; beginning every day at five o'clock in the morning, and regularly visiting twenty-two towns and villages, through a route of two hundred and sixty miles, much of which had to be traveled on foot, with his saddle-bags on his back, as there was but one horse on the circuit for four preachers, and he was the youngest of them all.

His next circuit was that of St. Austell, in Cornwall, where Methodism now had general sway, and where his talents found a befitting field. His popularity at once became universal; his congregations were so crowded that he sometimes had to climb into the chapel by a window, and almost every week in the year he was compelled to preach in the open air to crowds which no chapel could accommodate, where he held them spell-bound by his words under pelting rains and on deep snow. A general revival prevailed on his circuit, and from this time forward Adam Clarke was one of the chiefs of the Wesleyan Connection.

His daily travels gave him daily solitude for his books, and his daily preaching was an invigorating exercise to his mind and body. Wesley himself studied more than most students, and did it on horseback. He says that by his rides he was "as much retired ten hours a day as if he were in a wilderness," and thus few persons spent so many hours secluded from all company as he. Clarke admired and imitated him, and at length mastered the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Samaritan, Chaldee, and Syriac versions of the Scriptures, as well as most of the languages of Western Europe. He studied nearly every branch of literature and of physical science, and was honored with membership in the London, Asiatic, Geological, and other learned societies, as well as with highly honorable positions



under the Government, and in connection with the British and Foreign Bible Society.

**A Narrow Escape.**—In the life of Adam Clarke, written by his son, an incident is related which shows how nearly this great biblical scholar had been lost to the Church and the world. In 1782, while traveling the Bradford Circuit, he chanced to find a Latin sentence written on the wall of his chamber, to which he added, as being in the same vein, these lines of Virgil, changing the last word to suit the wanderings of the preachers rather than those of *Æneas*:—

*“ Quo fata trahunt, retrahuntque, sequamur. Per rarios casus, per tot discrimina rerum, Tendimus in ” Coelum.*

The next preacher who saw it, by way of reproving the pride of the young scholar, wrote underneath these words:—

“ Did you write the above to show us that you could write Latin! For shame! Do send pride to hell, from whence it came. O young man, improve your time; eternity’s at hand.”

On his next round the “little boy preacher” read and accepted the reproof, and, falling on his knees, he vowed never to meddle with Greek or Latin again as long as he lived! A long time afterward, coming upon a French essay which pleased him, he translated it, and sent it to Mr. Wesley for his *Arminian Magazine*, and Wesley, who knew that ignorance and pride are twins, and that one of the best ways to drive out thoughts of self is to keep the mind full of sound knowledge, wrote to the young preacher accepting the piece, and charging him to cultivate his mind as far as circumstances would allow, and “not to forget any thing he had ever learned.”

Alas! through the counsel of an ignorant, ambitious, and perhaps envious itinerant, Clarke had not looked at his Greek and Latin for nearly four years; but now he saw his error, and with the same teachable spirit, but under a better instructor, he begged the Lord to forgive his rash vow, and at once set about the task of recovering the knowledge he had nearly lost.

As a preacher he was wonderfully successful. His deep devotion to learning won for him the admiration of scholars and the degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of Laws from the Scotch University of Aberdeen, while his warm Irish heart, his polite manners, and his Christian temper made him a universal favorite with



the common people, who throughout the history of Methodism have shown such high admiration of real scholarship as to disprove the slander which charges the Wesleyan revival with hostility to learning.

The records of its ministry abound with the marvelous successes of unlearned men, whose want of literary training was quite forgotten in view of the baptism of power which descended upon their heads and hearts. In view of such successes some, both among the ministry and the laity, have rushed to the conclusion that scholarship and piety did not agree together, and the loud, empty tone in which these views have been set forth have by some superficial observers been mistaken for the voice of Methodism itself. But, so far from being the rule, this is only the exception. Methodist preachers have made more efforts and overcome more obstacles to acquire sound learning than any other class of men on earth of equal numbers; and Methodist congregations, though at first chiefly composed of people to whom ignorance was a sad necessity, have proved their appreciation of "book learning" by adopting as their prime favorites, in the pulpit and on the platform, the most largely learned and the most thoroughly accomplished ministers of the Connection. In the highest circles as well as the lowest, native genius and rough common sense are preferred to pretentious exhibitions of the polish of the schools; but among the lowest, not less than among the highest, as these social distinctions go, ignorance is and always was regarded as contemptible in those who assumed to teach religion. Courtly manners and splendid powers, along with genuine Christian manhood—the want of which nothing can excuse—so far from putting the common people of Methodism in an unsympathetic attitude, always warm their hearts and call forth their loving admiration; and, in spite of the fact that so large a proportion of the approved course of liberal learning has been above their comprehension, and almost useless from their point of view, still the instinct of Methodism has upheld the academy and the college, and some of the brightest ornaments of Methodist pulpits and professors' chairs have been the children of the poor.

When the school of heraldry shall make for Methodist preachers a coat-of-arms, it will surely have a man on horseback in its field; but, if the artist would be true to history, the itinerant must have an open book before him resting on the horn of his saddle.



## ADAM CLARKE.

**Clarke's Commentary** is the chief foundation of his fame; and few scholars since the world began have had one broader or deeper. Certain recent critics have tried to superannuate this great Methodist classic; but it still remains on the effective list. Never has any other one man achieved such a triumph in biblical exposition, especially of the Old Testament, as this great Irish Methodist preacher and scholar. Unaided and alone, with the cares of great societies pressing heavily upon him, at a time when the materials for the study of the Oriental tongues were far from perfect, he explored the mysteries of the original Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, tracing them through their translations into Arabic, Persian, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, French, Danish, etc.; following them through the Chaldee and Samaritan versions, and, in order to gather up the fragments that nothing might be lost, traversing the vast wilderness of Talmuds and Targums, as well as the cognate literature of all other known religions.

"In this arduous work," he writes, "I have had no assistants, not even a single week's help from an amanuensis, the help excepted which I received in the chronological department from my nephew, John Edward Clarke. I have labored alone for twenty-five years previously to the work being sent to press, and fifteen years have been employed in bringing it through the press, so that nearly forty-five years of my life have been so consumed." The first part of his commentary was published in 1810, the last in 1825.

While preaching in London he was called into the committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and for several years its publications in the Oriental languages were largely under his direction. His only other literary work of any magnitude was his "Biographical Dictionary" in six volumes, published in 1802, by which he made his first fame as an author.

**Adam Clarke's Views of Marriage.**—The wife of Adam Clarke was Miss Mary Cooke, an admirable and accomplished English lady. The marriage was an exceedingly happy one, though it was not brought about without a good deal of opposition. The pride of the parents was shocked at the thought of their daughter becoming the wife of a Methodist itinerant, and Mr. Wesley, learning the state of the case, declared that if his young preacher married the girl without the consent of her friends he would turn him out of the Connection;



but at length that great man, becoming aware of the admirable qualities of Miss Cooke, made intercession with her parents on Adam's behalf, and they were married in the Wanbridge Church on the 17th of April, 1788, and about a week after sailed for his appointment in the Norman Islands.

Like the most of his countrymen, Clarke was a great admirer of fine women, his true gallantry appearing on all occasions; notably in his charming pen portrait of the mother of the Wesleys, whom he regarded as the perfect model of a Christian matron. His oft-quoted remark in defense of matrimony, that a man ought to be grateful for even a bad wife, because she was so much better than none, shows how much happier he was than his great chief in his married life, and how much more natural, as well as orthodox, were his views of this first sacrament, this oldest means of grace. Adam Clarke and his wife were blessed with six sons and six daughters; three sons and three daughters died in childhood, the rest, in the language of his biographer, being "respectably and comfortably settled in life." Reference has already been made to the singular appointment of "Adam Clarke and his wife" to the Dublin Circuit; a sufficient indication of the esteem in which that lady was held by Mr. Wesley.

**Adam Clarke's Theology.**—How he escaped from the Churchmanship of his father, or the Presbyterianism instilled into him by his mother, does not appear in his biography. The whole family seem to have been captivated by the first Methodist preacher they ever heard, and it may be that the elasticity of the Irish nature will allow the indwelling of a whole brood of dogmatic theologies in a single Irish soul.

Dr. Clarke, with his generous nature, never could have been any thing but an Arminian. Free grace was a doctrinal necessity to him: no predestination could stand in the way of any poor sinner who wanted to be good and go to glory. According to his hospitable ideas, the front door of heaven stood wide open day and night, and he was almost ready to believe there was a side door, or a back door, also, by which the animal creation might enter. And in this latter view he held with John Wesley, who regarded it as highly probable, from the visions of the future world seen and recorded



by Scripture writers, that the redemption of Christ extended to the whole creation, which, Paul declares, had groaned and travailed in pain together, awaiting this very event. There are to be new heavens and a new earth, and Wesley, Clarke, and other equally wise and liberal doctors of theology, do not see why there should not be on that new earth, made of the old one, representatives of the animal kingdom, at least all that are capable of domestication, with powers and dispositions as much improved in proportion as will be the powers and dispositions of human beings.

There was one difficult point in the orthodox creed which Dr. Clarke ventured to dispute, and for which he was severely taken to task by Richard Watson; namely, The Eternal Sonship of the Son of God. To the mind of the great Irish divine the words "Father" and "Son" necessarily carried with them the idea of a difference of age, which opinion it is the especial mission of "the eternal Sonship" to deny. His notion, also, that the creature which tempted our first parents in the garden of Eden was not a serpent at all, but something of a humanish shape—a monkey or a baboon, perhaps—was received with small respect; for the gorilla, which, from his looks, might easily be the devil, had not yet been discovered, nor had the theory been much mooted that through this class of animals the rise and not the fall of the human race had been secured.

The commentary of Dr. Clarke and the hymns of Charles Wesley are the Methodist writings which have had the widest use outside of the Methodist Connection. The skill, the care, and the catholicity of the one has given it place among the best products of Christian scholarship, while the deep soul-knowledge and the divine inspiration of the other has been so widely felt and so highly prized, that now Charles Wesley belongs not only to the Methodists, but to the whole English-speaking world.

In 1795, and again in 1805, Mr. Wesley conferred on Dr. Clarke the highest honor then within the reach of the itinerants, by appointing him to the London Circuit, whose center was the Methodist cathedral—the City Road Chapel. Three times was he elected to the presidency of the British Wesleyan Conference, and at length, having won imperishable renown for himself, and worthily maintained the Wesleyan succession as a Christian scholar and author,



he sunk under the weight of his literary labors, retired to a small estate called Hayden Hall, at Bayswater, then a Middlesex village, now a part of London, where, after nine invalid years, he departed this life on the 26th of August, 1832, at about the age of seventy-two.

**Gideon Ouseley.**—The annals of Irish Methodism afford no more characteristic and delightful study than that of the career of Gideon Ouseley. Adam Clarke is far more famous, but he left old Ireland in his youth to become an Englishman for the rest of his life; but Ouseley was a true son of Erin, to the manor born and bred, and in all respects, from first to last, an ideal Irish Methodist preacher.

His father was a comfortable farmer in the village of Dunmore, in the county of Galway, in the province of Connaught, a man who pretended to despise religion on account of the dissolute lives of some of its priests and ministers, but who, nevertheless, determined to bring up his son Gideon for a parson, because that was a profitable trade. His mother, however, was a godly woman, who taught her children out of the Bible, and such other good books as Tiltonson's "Sermons," and Young's "Night Thoughts;" rather heavy material, these last, for an Irishman in his childhood, but Gideon thrived well on this course of training, inasmuch as the Bible always stood first on the list.

When he was a well-grown lad he was placed under the care of one of the old-time country school-masters, to be fitted for that literary Mecca of the Irish youth, Trinity College, Dublin; but before he was ready to enter his father fell heir to a fine farm in the neighboring county of Roscommon, which led him to change his views for his son Gideon, whom he now thought had a superior opening as a farmer.

While yet a boy Gideon married, and with his girlish bride set up housekeeping on a small estate given them by her father. He was a lively lad, of a powerful frame, a leader in muscular sports, a dashing horseman, a prime favorite at fairs, hurling matches, horse-races, wakes and weddings, full of wit, free with his money in gift or wager, and able to carry off his full share of punch from a drinking bout without becoming unsteady in the legs: a list of accomplishments which soon brought him to the end of his little fortune, and compelled him to



return to Dunmore, where, in a drunken row, he was shot in the face and neck, by which he lost one of his eyes. Upon this he resolved to live a better life, but all his resolutions failed, and at length even his faithful wife despaired of his reform.



A ROADSIDE SERMON IN THE SADDLE.

Sometime about the year 1788, when Ouseley was twenty-six years of age—he having been born in 1762—a detachment of the Fourth Irish Dragoons was stationed at Dunmore. Among them



were several Methodists, who hired a large room at the village inn where they set up a series of open meetings that at once became a wonder among the people; especially the singing of hymns, the praying without a book, and the talk that sounded like preaching, by men who did not claim to be priests or ministers, and had no sign of a manuscript before them.

"There must be some trick about it," said Onseley, and refused to visit the meetings; but at last he determined to examine into it. The result was that he discovered more than he had dreamed of, for he found out from the Methodists that he was a lost sinner, whose only hope of salvation was through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; his conviction of sin became intense, and after a desperate struggle with the old nature, which was mightily strong in him, he one day fell down on his knees, alone in his house, and cried, "O God, I will submit!" upon which these words of Scripture came to his mind: "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, . . . and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." This comforted him greatly, and he at once began to break off his sins by righteousness, but it was some time before he found peace in believing.

The poor opinion of ministers and Churches which he had learned from his father now arose to trouble him. In Rome and her Church he had no faith whatever; the Established Church of England and Ireland he regarded as cubs of the same wolf; and as for the Methodists, they were a new people who might be of a somewhat better sort, but he did not like to risk himself so far as to become a member of "Society;" though, feeling lonesome as he trudged on by himself toward the kingdom of Heaven, he occasionally ventured to attend the Methodist class.

**Onseley's Conversion,** after long and deep conviction and many fruitless efforts to save himself, occurred on a Sunday morning in May, in the year 1791. It was a thorough and radical transformation from darkness to light; a clear and distinct witness of the Spirit to the pardon of his sins and his acceptance with God. He never wearied of telling about "that Sunday," and how, when the blessing came, he was able to cry out: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour."



It was a mighty and glorious conversion, and he declared it with all his heart, whereupon his old companions, hearing that Ouseley had joined the Methodists, made sure that the man must be going mad. Again and again the floods of grace broke over him, filling him with unspeakable joy, and great hungering after more righteousness; and after fasting and praying for "a clean heart," as his brethren taught him out of the Scriptures, he came into the enjoyment of the blessing of sanctification, and of "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

His was just the transparent, jubilant, full-orbed nature for grace to do its grandest work upon—even the grace of God does not make great Christians out of little souls—and straightway, in the fullness of salvation promised in the word of God and preached by the old-time Methodists, he began to publish how great things the Lord had done for him and in him. His deistical father regarded all this as only a part of the vagaries naturally to be looked for in such a mind, but his wife, though for a time she was actually alarmed at his extravagant demonstrations of religious joy, came at length to understand the mystery, and accepted his Saviour as her own.

**His Call to the Ministry**, of which he gives this account, is quite in harmony with all the rest of his religious experience:—

"The voice said, 'Gideon, go and preach the Gospel.'

"'How can I go?' says I. 'O Lord God, I cannot speak, for I am a child.'

"'Do you not know the disease?'

"'O, yes, Lord, I do!' says I.

"'And do you not know the cure?'

"'Indeed I do, glory be to thy holy name!' says I.

"'Go, then, and tell them these two things, the disease and the cure. All the rest is nothing but talk.'

"And so here I am, these forty years just telling of the disease and the cure."\*

**Ouseley's Ministry among the Irish Peasants.**—

Although the Ouseleys were of the higher class of Irish, who speak better English than the great majority of Englishmen, Gideon had somehow learned the old Irish tongue, and when he began to

\* ARTHUR'S "Life of Ouseley."



preach in it to the peasants in the highways and hedges, and especially in the grave-yards at funerals, they listened with wonder and delight.

The curate of his parish, who was not very well spoken of for sound morals, let alone theology, once preached a hot sermon against the Methodists, and Ouseley stood up in his pew after it was over and answered him out of the Scripture, for which offense against the peace and dignity of the Church he was near being sent to prison: the high respectability of his family alone saving him that disgrace, and his father, who had manifested little concern about his son when he would come home drunk from a fair or a fight, now set vigorously to work to reform him of his Methodism. He threatened to disown him if he did not give up preaching; but his good wife stood by him, and chose with him to suffer the loss of all things rather than be false to the call of the Lord: thus the farming ceased and the preaching went on.

It was his habit to attend the wakes and "berrins" (burials) in all the country round, which in those days were almost always the most hilarious revels that the wild Irish nature and strong Irish whisky could produce. Every one was expected to do his best to make the occasion as lively as possible, by way of favor to the living and compliment to the dead, and when the liquor was over-plentiful, and the grief was over strong, the wake was in danger of ending in a fight. In the midst of these mortuary carousals Ouseley would come in, and with the utmost friendliness, and that courtesy which is the birthright of every genuine son of Erin, he would manage somehow or other to turn the revel into a very effective religious service.

On one occasion a crowd of people were kneeling around a grave where the priest was droning the mass for the dead, in Celtic Latin, when a stranger rode up and joined the mourners. As the priest went on with his reading in a tongue of which the poor peasants could not understand a single word, the stranger caught up passage after passage, especially such as contained Scripture allusions, and translated them into Irish; saying to the people, in a tone of the utmost tenderness and affection: "Do you hear that?" "Listen to that now!"

The people were completely melted, and the priest was overwhelmed with amazement. After the mass was over Ouseley gave them a little exhortation, pointed them to Jesus Christ, by the faith



of whom they might one day die in peace and go to heaven, and then mounted his horse and rode away.

"Who is it, Father ——?" asked the mourners, as he was departing.

"I don't know at all," said the priest; "I think he must be an angel, for sure no mortal man could do the likes o' that."

Years afterward the preacher met a man who reminded him of the scene, saying:—

"Don't ye remimber the berrin', an' ye explainin' to us the mass that the praste was radin'?"

"I do," said Ouseley.



AN IRISH FUNERAL.

"Ye tould us that day how to find the Lord; and, blessed be his howly name! I've had him in me heart iver since."

In 1797, the year before the Irish Rebellion, Ouseley, under a clear impression of a divine call, removed to Ballymote in the County of Sligo, and commenced a tour of evangelistic labor on his own account, and was soon honored with a place in the Black Hole of the Sligo barracks for "disturbing the peace by preaching." At the same time the minister of the Irish Presbyterian Church, the most correct of all the "regular Christians" in that island, was accustomed to perform



the service of his parish Church on a Sunday morning with a surplice over his shooting-jacket, and then spend the afternoon in hunting; and no one made any complaint.

Many a poor "rebel" in the Rebellion of '98 did Ouseley visit in prison, and help to prepare for death; and in order to be, like his Master, no respecter of persons, he studied the Missal and Catechism of the Church of Rome, as well as the theology of the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Methodists, and thus he was able to reach the hearts of all classes of sinners, for whom there is only one way to be saved. In those days of horror and blood he was often arrested, both by the scouts of the Government and the rebels, but he always preached his way out of their clutches, for it was evident that he was nothing less or more than a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ.

At the next Wesleyan Conference after the Irish Rebellion Dr. Coke proposed his plan for a mission among the Irish-speaking people of that country, and on the nomination of William Hamilton, who had superintended the Sligo Circuit, Gideon Ouseley was appointed to the work, along with James M'Quigg and Charles Graham. He was then thirty-six years of age.

**A Sacred Language.**—It was firmly believed by the people among whom these three men were sent, that the devil could not speak the Irish language, and when these three singular beings suddenly appeared on horseback at a fair, or a wake, or a festival of some local patron saint, and began to preach the Gospel in the Irish tongue, the simple peasants accepted their words as a revelation from heaven, and sometimes would actually fall down before them in adoration, as they were wont to do before the shrine of St. Patrick or the Virgin. On the other hand they were often assaulted by men who claimed to be "respectable," and who would now and then raise a mob of those same peasants against them.

One day a handful of mud was thrown into Ouseley's face while he was preaching.

"Did I deserve that, boys?" he asked of the crowd.

"Indade ye didn't," answered they; and when the ruffian attempted to repeat the insult they fell to beating him "fit to knock a score of devils out of him:" so volatile are the spirits of the people of that land.



**A Saddle for a Pulpit.**—The fame of the Irish preachers flew like wild-fire all over the country. God was in the word, and sinners of all religions and of no religion were stricken right and left. They “stormed the little towns as they rode along,” not stopping to dismount and look for a pulpit, but preaching and praying in their saddles; thus “riding their circuits” more literally than ever was done before. Market days were harvest days for them. They would ride into the midst of the crowd, start a Methodist hymn set to some well-known Irish air, or break out into an Irish exhortation at the top of their voices: and, be it known, the top of a voice like Ouseley’s was something to remember; ringing out high and clear above the rumble of carts and the noises of cattle, pigs, and poultry, and full often rising in stentorian shouts to assert itself above the din when some crowd of bigots or besotted ruffians would try to howl him down.

There was no lack of audiences; the great question was how to control them. Ouseley was as full of Irish wit as he was of Methodist religion, and he had plenty of use for both. With a catholicity of spirit and manner which was so successfully imitated by the great American Evangelist in his recent revival campaign in Dublin, this Irish missionary was ready to preach the Gospel to Protestants and Papists alike, and from first to last through his forty years’ career great numbers of sinners of both of these classes were brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. He had the sense to remember that there was a great deal of good at the bottom of the **papal mummeries**; for names he did not care a pin; therefore he would talk to a crowd of Romanists about the blessed Virgin to their hearts’ content, and then wind up with a stirring appeal based on some of the words of “her Son.” He was once set upon by a crowd of the peasantry full of zeal for “Howly Rome,” when the following dialogue ensued:—

“Clare out o’ this! We don’t want ony Methodis prachin’ in these parts.”

“See here, my dears; just listen a bit, and I’ll tell ye something that will please ye.”

“We wont be plased wid ony thing from the likes o’ *you*.”

“Try me and see. I want to talk to ye about her ye love: the blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord.”



"Well, what do *you* know about the Howly Mother?"

Ouseley, seizing his advantage, began to tell them a story of a wedding to which the blessed Virgin and her Son were invited; and how she induced Him to work a miracle for them by turning water into wine. He came presently to her instruction to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it;" from which text, with this introduction, he was permitted to preach them a rousing Gospel sermon.

At other times he would assault their blind superstitions with the most unanswerable arguments, as thus:—

One day a gang of furious blackguards attacked his congregation and attempted to force their way through the ranks of his friends, who strove to protect their preacher by keeping a solid circle round him. Ouseley stopped at once, and said:—

"Make way for these gentlemen. I have important business with them."

Every body was surprised at this, none more so than the gang of roughs themselves. Then, turning to the men who had come to "bate the life out of him," he said:—

"My friends, are you acquainted with the priest of this parish?"

"We are."

"Will you take a message to him for me?"

"We will. What is it?"

"I want to have him tell me if he can make a fly; not a fishing fly, ye understand, but one of them little biting, buzzing fellows, like that one sittin' on the neck of my horse. Can he make a fly out of a bit of clay?"

"Shure what's the use of askin' him that? Ony body knows he can't do it."

"Well, then, my dears, if the priest can't make a little fly out of a bit of clay, how can he make the Lord Jesus Christ out of a bit of bread?"

His antagonists were not smart enough to meet this attack on the popish doctrine of transubstantiation, and, feeling that they had been beaten in argument—a wound which sometimes hurts an Irishman more than a broken head—they retired from the field, and Ouseley went on with his discourse.



Great was the power which attended their word as Ouseley, Graham, and Hamilton roamed the counties of Sligo, Roscommon, Mayo, Cavan, Armagh, Tyrone, and, indeed, over almost the whole northern half of Ireland; seeking out the most neglected regions, and preaching of sin and salvation, "the disease and the cure." If rhetoric be "the art of persuasion," these men were very princes in rhetoric; besides, in what is called oratory they might have been distinguished, if they had cared to be so. The saddle was their rostrum, and two peasants in a bog, or by a roadside, made them a worthy congregation: not that they lacked for crowds; being often attended by great multitudes of eager, ignorant, impressible people, who listened to this Irish version of the Gospel as a message straight from heaven to their own particular selves, and to whom these "cavalry preachers" were little less than angels on horseback.

Conversions multiplied, many of them of the same pronounced and demonstrative type as that of Ouseley himself, and their holy ecstasies were sometimes mistaken by the priests and parsons for demoniacal possession. One Catholic convert, under the ministry of Graham, was brought to the priest of the parish to be cured of his "bad religion," and his reverence, it is said, actually attempted the miracle of casting the "Methodist devil" out of him: using forms of prayer appropriate to the exorcism of evil spirits, and pronouncing over him, with all solemnity, these words, "Come out, Graham: come out of him, I say!" But, as is so often the case with Romish miracles, the power in this instance utterly failed to work.

For years these sturdy men carried their lives in their hands; preaching sometimes amid showers of eggs, potatoes, bludgeons, and stones, and at other times surrounded by weeping, praying, loving multitudes, who knelt at their feet, ready to kiss the very ground on which they stood. Again and again they were set upon by mobs who were bent on "putting them out of the way," but the Lord always made a way for their escape.

They frequently enlivened their sermons by hymns in the Irish language, while the multitude sobbed aloud, or waved to and fro, swayed by the simple music. Some of the hearers would be weeping; others, on their knees, were calling upon the Virgin and the saints; others still were shouting questions or defiance to the preachers,



and throwing sticks or stones at them; some rolled up their sleeves to attack, and others to defend them, and frequently the confusion culminated in a genuine Hibernian riot, the parties rushing pell-mell upon each other, roaring, brandishing shillalahs, and breaking heads, till brought to order at last by the intervention of the magistrates or a platoon of troops from the barracks.

These riots were charged against the missionaries, but to these criticisms Ouseley replied:—

“You have riots in attempting to govern this people, but you do not, therefore, abandon your efforts to govern them; we, too, have confusions in our attempts to save this people, but that is no reason for abandoning our efforts toward their salvation.”



AN IRISH HOVEL.

In this wild fashion thousands of this wretched population were converted, set to studying the Bible, and brought into the fellowship of the Protestant Churches. The glorious results overbalanced all objections of “irregularity,” and the best people of the island at length became the

admirers and supporters of “the black caps,” as they were called from their habit of wearing black velvet caps to protect their heads from the weather and from blows when they took off their hats for preaching or prayer.

A minister who witnessed their labors wrote to Dr. Coke: “The mighty power of God accompanies their word with such demonstrative evidence as I have never known, or indeed rarely heard of. I have been present in fairs and markets while these blessed men of God, with burning zeal and apostolic ardor, pointed hundreds and thousands to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. And I have seen the immediate fruit of their labor: the aged and



the young falling prostrate in the most public places of concourse, cut to the heart, and refusing to be comforted until they knew Jesus and the power of his resurrection. I have known scores of these poor penitents to stand up and witness a good confession; and, blessed be God! hundreds of them now adorn the Gospel of Christ Jesus."

**Irish Methodist Emigrants.**—Of the results of the labors of these Irish Methodist heroes no estimate can be given. To the awful horrors of the Rebellion in '98 succeeded the rush of emigration to America, by which many Societies were utterly broken up, and many others were so reduced in membership that it became necessary for the English Conference to take a large share of the support of the Irish preachers upon their own hands. During the fifteen years from 1824 to 1839 it is estimated that ten thousand Irish Methodists emigrated to America, being, of course, the very flower of their enterprise and strength.

**Ouseley as an Author.**—Few men have been better qualified to deal with the shallow doctrines of Popery than this Irish itinerant. He knew their weakness in history as well as in logic and Scripture, and being, like so many of his countrymen, a natural master of debate, when he made an attack on a Romish dogma there was but little of it left. If errors in religion would only remain dead when they are killed the truth would by this time have prevailed the world over; but the history of theology bears too abundant testimony that it is but a small part of the work of destroying a dogma to prove that it is false. Do not even sensible people sometimes cherish notions in religion which they know are not true?

Ouseley's chief publication, "The Defense of Old Christianity," is a fair-sized volume, full and running over with wit, wisdom, argument and Scripture. The book did good service in its day in enlightening honest inquirers concerning the errors of Rome, and many are the souls who have been brought to Christ by its means. Other smaller publications are extant, and further illustrate the controversial skill of this Irish Methodist hero, who for forty years, with tongue and pen, preached the word of life to a class of persons who, it has been thought by most Protestant believers, were altogether beyond the reach of evangelical truth.



**M'Quigg and the Irish Bible.**—The other member of the first trio of Irish Methodist itinerants, James M'Quigg, rendered a memorable service to his countrymen by editing a new edition of the Bible in the Irish language, which the British and Foreign Bible Society published, under his direction. By his influence the plan of employing Bible readers was widely adopted, and so great was its success that in one district it was announced that forty thousand persons were being taught to read the Irish Bible, and more than double that number were hearing it read in their own cabins. As a result there were great numbers of converts from Romanism; in some counties they were reported by the hundred at a time.

M'Quigg, who was a scholar, a gentleman, and an able debater, as well as preacher, was prevented by ill health from sharing long in the wild missionary life of his brethren, Ouseley, Graham, Hamilton, and the rest; and after his invaluable Bible work he died just as his grand scheme of spreading the Irish Scriptures was reaching the climax of its success.

The death of Gideon Ouseley occurred on the 14th of May, 1839, the centennial year of British Methodism, in the seventy-eighth year of his age. In spite of the weight of years "Father Ouseley" persisted to the last in his work of preaching "the disease and the cure." The singleness of his heart was one of the chief characteristics of his career. He had nothing else in the world to do but to help sinners to be saved, and whether he were in the pulpit, in his saddle, at a fair, on the road, or sitting in a peasant's cabin with the children climbing all over him, he was ever finding in the simple sayings or doings of the people a guide to their better judgment, or the shortest road to their hearts. Nor was it only among the peasantry that he was beloved. His native genius, wide knowledge, and transparent soul, gained him multitudes of admirers among the educated and refined; but above all these honors was the oft-recurring joy he felt as some stranger would grasp his hand and say:—

"Do you remember such a wake, or such a fair, or such a horseback sermon? It was there you led me to the Lord."

His last words were: "I have no fear of death. God's Spirit is my support." Graham, his early comrade, died in 1824, and William Hamilton, the chief collaborator of his later years, in 1816.





*Made by 17<sup>th</sup> Feb'y 1766*

*J Fletcher*

## CHAPTER XII.

TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS: FRIENDS AND FOES.

**Methodism in Scotland.**—The theological soil and climate of Scotland were not favorable to the growth of Methodism. John Calvin and John Knox had so strong a hold upon the Scottish mind and heart that there was little room therein for John Wesley. Sometime previous to 1754 a small Society had been formed at Edinburgh, and in that year Mr. Wesley paid a visit to the General Assembly of



the Church of Scotland, composed of one hundred and fifty ministers, of whose deliberations he makes the following record:—

“A single question took up the whole time, which, when I went away, seemed to be as far from a conclusion as ever, namely, ‘Shall Mr. Lindsay be removed to Kilmarnock parish or not?’ The argument for it was, ‘He has a large family, and this living is twice as good as his own.’ The argument against it was, ‘The people are resolved not to hear him, and will leave the Kirk if he comes.’ If, then, the real point in view had been, as their law directs, *majus bonum Ecclesiæ*, [the greater good of the Church,] instead of taking up five hours the debate might have been determined in five minutes.

“I rode to Dundee, and about half an hour after six preached on the side of a meadow near the town. Poor and rich attended. Indeed, there is seldom fear of wanting a congregation in Scotland. But the misfortune is, they know every thing; so they learn nothing.

“Lodging with a sensible man, I inquired particularly into the present discipline of the Scotch parishes. In one parish it seems there are twelve ruling elders; in another there are fourteen. And what are these? Men of great sense and deep experience? Neither one nor the other. But they are the *richest* men in the parish.”

At Old Aberdeen, the ancient seat of King’s College, Wesley was well received by both college and citizens, and, as the result of his labors, he left there a Society of ninety members. A Society was also formed at Glasgow, which Wesley visited in 1774; on which occasion, as was his custom, he attended the regular services of the national Church, but was not very much edified. “My spirit,” he says, “was moved within me at the sermons I heard both morning and afternoon. They contained much truth, but were no more likely to awaken one soul than an Italian opera.”

It was Wesley’s opinion that Scotchmen would endure the plainest preaching of any class of persons he had met; they would take it stronger and more of it than any other people on earth; so there could have been no excuse for the flat sermons above mentioned. But the preacher of them was not alone in his wicked fashion of prophesying smooth things, as appears from an entry in his Journal in 1779:—

“In five years I found five members had been gained! ninety-nine being increased to a hundred and four. What, then, have our



preachers been doing all this time? 1. They have preached four evenings in the week, and on Sunday morning; the other mornings they have fairly given up. 2. They have taken great care not to speak too plain, lest they should give offense. 3. When Mr. Brackenbury preached the old Methodist doctrine, one of them said, 'You must not preach such doctrine here. The doctrine of perfection is not calculated for the meridian of Edinburgh.' Waiving, then, all other hinderances, is it any wonder that the work of God has not prospered here?"

The personal qualifications of Mr. Wesley could hardly fail to command respect and even admiration among the thoughtful people



DUNMORE CASTLE, COAST OF AYR, SCOTLAND.

of Scotland; but his influence was not sufficient to gain for his people any considerable share of the respect which was paid to himself. After his death Methodism did not thrive north of the Tweed, as appears from a mention made of it in 1826 by Dr. Adam Clarke, who says: "I consider Methodism as having no hold of Scotland but in Glasgow and Edinburgh. If all the other chapels were dispersed it



would be little loss to Methodism and a great saving of money, which might be better employed."

**Early Methodist Discipline.**—To those who question the strict personal government of John Wesley over his helpers in the work of the gospel, this may be a sufficient reply: With such preachers and such people this was a prime necessity, not only for the efficiency, but also for the existence, of the Methodist Reformation. There were men in those days, as well as in these, who declared against the tyranny of their chief, but they were not the best men. A good soldier is obedient as well as brave.

To us Americans "obedience" is an ugly word, and any vigorous efforts to enforce it by those to whom it is due, and who are responsible for its results, is apt to bring out the cry of tyranny. As well may the subaltern in the army cry out against the obedience demanded by his general. Power to command is the safety as well as the efficiency of the battalions and divisions in the Church militant, and so it will continue to be as long as any organized opposition to the kingdom of darkness is required. And, after all, does not the much-mooted question of conflict between liberty and authority in the Church, when hunted down to its lowest hiding-place in the hearts of discontented men, usually resolve itself into another question, namely: Who shall rule and who shall obey? Few men have had so strong a conscience against ecclesiastical authority as not to be willing to exercise it themselves.

In the Wesleyan movement there was no occasion for this latter question: God had settled it himself. There was no man except John Wesley in the whole Connection who had either the right or the capacity to lead this great revival movement; and he led it grandly and successfully, because, among other things, he had the courage as well as the wisdom to demand that his "sons in the ministry" should "obey" him. Between him and the lay preachers who rallied around him there was a vast difference and distance in learning, in social and clerical position, in personal ability, and, above all, in that divine right of pre-eminence which came of his call to his great mission. He was a bishop by a higher authority than any traditional succession; the prelates of Canterbury and York were vastly his inferiors both in talents and in office; they were ecclesiastical princes in the Church of



England, while Wesley was a bishop by the grace of God. He showed the true signs of an apostle; a showing which few primates have made; and, therefore, he had a right to exercise apostolic power; however, it will generally appear that he was chiefly, if not entirely, concerned for the well-being of the souls committed to his care, and not for the maintenance of his own dignity. The only person whom he held as an equal was his brother Charles, who was both a clergyman, a hero, and a poet; but he was so full of High-Church notions that it was no great loss to the Societies when he settled down with his family in London, and ceased to serve the cause in any way except by writing hymns.

The first judicial sentence passed upon an offending itinerant preacher was in the case of James Wheatley, a soft, discursive brother, and a prime favorite with the people, over whom Charles Wesley makes this lamentation: "I threw away some advice on an obstinate preacher, James Wheatley; for I could make no impression on him, or in any degree bow his stiff neck. He has gone to the North especially contrary to my advice. Whither will his willfulness lead him at last?" Two years afterward John Wesley speaks of him as a "wonderful self-deceiver and a hypocrite." He was a lewd fellow, given also to lying; and when his offenses were brought to light the two Wesleys, after a hearing in the presence of ten of his brethren, pronounced sentence of suspension upon him, in a document which they put in his hands, under date of June 25, 1751, and which closes as follows:—

"We can in no wise receive you as a fellow-laborer till we see clear proofs of your real and deep repentance. Of this you have given us no proof yet. You have not so much as named one single person, in all England or Ireland, with whom you have behaved ill, except those we knew before.

"The least and lowest proof of such repentance which we can receive is this—that till our next conference (which we hope will be in October) you abstain both from preaching and from practicing physic. If you do not, we are clear; we cannot answer for the consequences.

"JOHN WESLEY,

"CHARLES WESLEY."



"The practice of physic," from which this first culprit was interdicted, was a frequent function of Mr. Wesley's preachers; his book entitled "Primitive Physic" being so full of practical information that any intelligent man, with the requisite amount of sympathy and assurance, might, with its help, be a very serviceable doctor among the ignorant and the poor. It was Methodist physic as well as Methodist religion which the itinerants preached and practiced, and hence the Wesleys were right in suspending the offender from administering, by their name and authority, either the one or the other.

**Conference Roll in 1751.**—Soon after this case of suspension there was a general examination, conducted by Charles Wesley, into the character and labors of all the preachers.

"It was now twelve years since Methodism was fairly established. During that period eighty-five itinerants had, more or less, preached and acted under Wesley's guidance. Of these, one (Wheatley) had been expelled; six, Thomas Beard, Enoch Williams, Samuel Hitchens, Thomas Hitchens, John Jane, and Henry Millard, had died in their Master's work; ten, for various reasons, had retired; and sixty-eight were still employed, namely:—

Cornelius Bastable,	Jonathan Catlow,	Edward Dunstan,
William Biggs,	Alexander Coates,	John Edwards,
John Bennet,	Joseph Cownley,	John Fisher,
Benjamin Beanland,	William Darney,	William Fugill,
William Crouch,	John Downes,	Nicholas Gilbert,
Paul Greenwood,	James Morris,	Charles Skelton,
John Haughton,	Jonathan Maskew,	Robert Swindells,
Thomas Hardwick,	John Morley,	Thomas Seacombe,
William Holmes,	Samuel Megget,	John Trembath,
John Haime,	Thomas Mitchell,	David Tratham,
William Hitchens,	James Morgan,	Joseph Tucker,
Christopher Hopper,	James Massiott,	William Tucker,
Herbert Jenkins,	John Nelson,	John Turner,
Joseph Jones,	James Oddie,	Thomas Tobias,
Samuel Jones,	William Prior,	Thomas Westall,
John Jones,	John Pearce,	Thomas Walsh,
Thomas Kead,	Edward Perronet,	Thomas Williams,



Samuel Larwood,	Charles Perronet,	Francis Walker,
Henry Lloyd,	Jacob Rowell,	Eleazer Webster,
Thomas Lee,	Thomas Richards,	John Whitford,
Thomas Maxfield,	Jonathan Reeves,	Richard Williamson,
John Maddern,	William Roberts,	James Wild.
Richard Moss,	William Shent,	

"Of this number two were expelled, namely: Thomas Williams in 1755, and William Fugill in 1768; and forty-one left the itinerancy; thus leaving only twenty-five of the sixty-eight preachers employed in 1751, who died in the itinerant work. Several of those who left became clergymen of the Church of England, some Dissenting ministers, and some, on account of failing health or for domestic reasons, entered into business, but lived and died as local preachers."

The persecutions which had kept the zeal of the Methodists alive had now nearly ceased, leaving them in the peaceful possession of their fields of labor, with no other contentions than such as arose within their own circles. Already the itinerants began to be at ease in Zion. Wesley complains that "idleness has eaten out the heart of half our preachers, particularly those in Ireland;" and he requested his brother to give them their choice: "To either follow your trade, or resolve before God to spend the same hours in reading, etc., which you used to spend in working. It is far better for us to have ten or six preachers who are alive to God, sound in the faith, and with one heart with us and with one another, than fifty of whom we have no such assurance."

**The Reverend John Fletcher.**—The name and fame of this saintly man is among the most precious of all the historic treasures of Methodism. Mr. Wesley's acquaintance with him began in 1752, and continued uninterrupted between thirty and forty years. "We were," says Wesley, "of one heart and one soul. We had no secrets between us. For many years we did not purposely hide any thing from each other."

John William de la Flechere, the youngest son of an officer of the French army, was born at Nyon, in Switzerland, September 12, 1729. He was early distinguished by his brilliant talents in the school at Geneva, to which he was sent for a classical education, and no less



for his tender conscience and deeply religious nature. He was learned in the German as well as in the French language, both of which were spoken in the French cantons, and also in mathematics and Hebrew; being, next to Wesley and Clarke, the most scholarly man whose name stands connected with the early history of the Methodist revival.

His piety and learning led his parents to mark out for him a priestly career, but John preferred the camp to the Church, giving as his reason that he did not feel himself worthy to enter the holy office. Somehow, also, he had conceived a hatred of the Geneva doctrine of predestination, as set down in the standards of the Swiss Protestant Church by its great prince and prophet, John Calvin; and as he would be required to profess his faith therein before he would be allowed to preach the Gospel, he resolved to lay down the Catechism and take up the sword.

For this purpose he went to Lisbon, where he gathered a company of Swiss adventurers, accepted a captain's commission from the King of Portugal, and was ordered to join a man-of-war, which was just about to sail for Brazil; but a painful accident befell him at his hotel on the day before the vessel's departure, which kept him in bed for a considerable time. The ship sailed away without him, and never was heard of again. His next



AMONG THE SWISS MOUNTAINS.

thought was to visit England, where he studied the English language, and in 1752 he engaged as a private tutor in the family of Thomas Hall, Esq., a country gentleman of Shropshire.

Upon one occasion, when going up to London with the family, during a brief halt at St. Albans, he fell in with an old woman who



talked to him so sweetly of the Lord Jesus Christ that he forgot all about his party, and they were obliged to go on to London without him. When he rejoined them at the capital, and gave an account of his detention, Mrs. Hall said, "I shall wonder if our tutor does not turn Methodist by and by."

"Methodist, madam: pray what is that?"

"Why, the Methodists are people that do nothing but pray; they pray all day and night."

"Do they," responded the tutor, "then, by the help of God, I will find them out if they be above ground."

Mr. Fletcher was as good as his word. He discovered, and was admitted to, the Society at the Foundry, where he learned the true way of salvation by faith, and after great struggles of soul he began to walk therein. He had always been counted very religious, and received the "premium for piety" at the Geneva University on account of his admirable essays on religious subjects. He had practiced various mortifications of the body; as fasting, vigils, solitude, and other pious practices; but now he saw himself a sinner, and cast himself wholly on Christ for salvation. His conversion was clear, radical and complete. Peace took the place of anxiety, and his efforts after self-righteousness gave place to entire consecration to, and dependence upon, the work and the merits of the Saviour. His heart was now turned to the ministry, and through the kindness of his patron he was offered the living of Dunham, a small parish with a large salary, amounting to four hundred pounds a year; but Mr. Fletcher had become interested in the people in a mining region, and had preached at a place called Madeley to a few wretched, neglected colliers, whom he with considerable effort had succeeded in bringing together, and therefore hesitated to accept the brilliant offer of his friend. Madeley was a poor little parish, with a miserable little old church and a salary in proportion, but it suited Fletcher better than Dunham, where, he declared, "there was too much money and too few souls," while the region about Madeley swarmed with vicious and neglected sinners. His patron, therefore, arranged with the Vicar of Madeley to exchange his meager living for the fat one at Dunham, thus leaving a vacancy at the former place, to which Fletcher was soon appointed.

His zeal and faithfulness soon raised a persecution against him;



indeed, in the estimation of these easy-going religionists and semi-insensible sinners, he must have been a very uncomfortable man. Finding the people did not come to church he went to seek them in their homes; held out-of-door services whenever opportunity offered; and when some of his parishioners excused their absence from public worship on the ground that they were tired and sleepy on Sunday morning after a whole week's work, and could not wake up in time to make themselves and their children ready for church, he assumed the office of bellman, and early on the Sabbath mornings for several months he tramped the Madeley streets, with a large bell in his hand,



MADELEY CHURCH.

ringing the people out of Sunday morning naps, and out of their excuse for staying away from the house of God.

His preaching was with marvelous eloquence, and as pungent as it was eloquent. He preached against drunkenness, and straightway all the ale-house party were in a rage. They began to interrupt his services by scurrilous language in church. A "bull-bait" was attempted on one occasion near the place where he had announced an out-of-door service, and a part of the drunken rabble were actually plotting to set the dogs on the parson; but from this he escaped by providential detention at a funeral. He preached against worldliness, and the



magistrates and gentry joined the cry against him. He preached regeneration and salvation by faith, and the neighboring clergy denounced him as a schismatic.

His liberality to the poor is said to be scarcely credible. He led a life of severe abstinence that he might feed the hungry, wore coarse garments that he might clothe the naked, and sometimes robbed his own house of necessary articles of furniture that he might supply the lack of suffering families about him. Thus, in spite of the opposition to his zeal and his theology, his enemies were forced to confess him a very saint in matters of charity.

In 1768 Mr. Fletcher was appointed by Lady Huntingdon to the presidency of her Theological School at Trevecca, which duties he assumed in addition to his Madeley pastorate.

Mr. Benson, who was the head master of the school, says that on occasions of his visits he was received as if he had been an "angel of God." Prayer, praise, love, and zeal, all ardent, elevated above what one would think attainable in this state of frailty, were the elements in which he continually lived. Languages, arts, sciences, grammar, rhetoric, logic, even divinity itself, as it is called, were all laid aside when he appeared in the school-room among the students. They seldom hearkened long before they were all in tears, and every heart caught fire from the flame that burned in his soul."

Closing these addresses, he would say: "As many of you as are athirst for the fullness of the Spirit of God follow me into my room." Many usually hastened thither, and it was like going into the Holiest of Holies. Two or three hours were spent there in such prevailing prayer as seemed to bring heaven down to earth. "Indeed," says Benson, "I frequently thought, while attending to his heavenly discourse and divine spirit, that he was so different from, and superior to, the generality of mankind, as to look more like Moses or Elijah, or some prophet or apostle come again from the dead, than a mortal man dwelling in a house of clay!"

Such was the man who was forced to resign his presidency of Trevecca College because he was not a believer in the Genevan doctrine of election and predestination.

Lady Huntingdon had been greatly disturbed on account of some doctrinal views set forth by her old friend Wesley in the Minutes of



his Conference in 1770, and, lest the "damnable heresy" of free grace should creep in among the callow young theologues at Trevecca she determined to test the soundness of her teachers and pupils, and all who did not disavow Mr. Wesley's theology were warned to quit the college. This action led to the immediate resignation of President Fletcher and to the dismissal of Professor Benson, who says: "I had been discharged wholly and solely because I did not believe the doctrine of absolute predestination."

The name of Fletcher is associated in the minds of many Methodists with the doctrine of Christian Perfection, of which he was, and is, one of the ablest defenders; and, what was better, Mr. Fletcher was himself an example of the theories he held.

There are few severer tests of a man's temper than that afforded by religious controversy; and to the everlasting praise of Fletcher let it be remembered that he maintained for years one of the sharpest discussions with the Calvinists, involving the most vital points in practical as well as dogmatic religion, and, though treated with severity and sometimes scurrility by his adversaries, he from first to last maintained the manners and spirit of a gentleman and a Christian.

**"Checks to Antinomianism."**—In that series of papers called "Checks to Antinomianism"—which have ever since been reckoned among the Methodist classics—he, with a sharp knife, a steady hand, and an even temper, dissected and exposed the malformations and hidden corruptions of the system of theology set forth in the "Institutes" of John Calvin, and in the controversial works of Toplady, Rowland Hill, and other divines of the Calvinistic school in the eighteenth century. He was a terrible adversary, not only because of the relentless vigor with which he hunted down the false doctrines, but also because of the faultlessness of his personal character, which gave his opponents no chance to evade the force of his arguments by raising some side issue concerning the conduct of their author.

The word "antinomianism," once so common in the mouth of Methodist preachers, is now so seldom heard that a definition of it may be of service. It is composed of two Greek words, *anti*, against, and *nomos*, law, and was used to describe that class of inferences from the doctrine of "unconditional election" whereby sinners were led to excuse their continuance in sin until God, by his "effectual calling" and



"irresistible grace," should come and bring them to salvation. Modern Calvinists sometimes become angry when the monstrous and legitimate conclusions of the Geneva theory are pointed out, and modern Methodists are sometimes accused of unfairness for so doing; but there are old men in the Methodist Church who can still remember the time when the battle between "free will" and "bond will" was waged with vigor both in England and America, and when the great obstacle in the way of bringing sinners to repentance was the fact that they had become Antinomians, and were "waiting for God's time." "If I am elected I shall certainly be saved, and if I am not elected there is no use of repenting," was a common plea on the part of those who were invited to seek the Lord; and to Fletcher belongs the honor of furnishing the best armory of logical weapons with which that strong delusion has now been driven out of the Church and almost out of the world.

**Fletcher's "Appeal."**—Among Mr. Fletcher's parishioners at Madeley there were a few who felt themselves too highly respectable to need the plain and searching words in which the good vicar was accustomed to instruct the larger and poorer portion of his flock, and who accordingly would leave the church when the liturgical part of the service was concluded, thus escaping the sermon altogether. In order to bring to the attention of these persons the unwelcome truth that rich people are sinners and in danger of going to hell as well as poor people, unless they "repent and believe the Gospel," Fletcher published a series of five sermons with the title of "An Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense; or, A Rational Demonstration of Man's Corrupt and Lost Estate," which he sent forth among his aristocratic parishioners, with the following characteristic preface —

"TO THE PRINCIPAL INHABITANTS OF THE PARISH OF MADELEY, IN THE COUNTY OF SALOP.

"GENTLEMEN: You are no less entitled to my private labors than the inferior class of my parishioners. As you do not choose to partake with them of my evening instruction, I take the liberty to present you with some of my morning meditations. May these well-meant endeavors of my pen be more acceptable to you than those of my tongue; and may you carefully read in your closets what you have perhaps inattentively heard in the church. - I appeal to the Searcher of



hearts that I had rather impart truth than receive tithes. You kindly bestow the latter upon me: grant me, I pray, the satisfaction of seeing you favorably receive the former from, gentlemen, your affectionate minister and obedient servant,

“MADELEY, 1772.”

“J. FLETCHER.”

Whatever the effect of this “Appeal” on the minds of his high-caste parishioners may have been, it became one of the recognized spiritual guides among the Methodists, and still holds an honorable place in the literature of the Church on both sides of the sea.

**Mrs. Mary Fletcher.**—In 1771 Mr. Fletcher was united in marriage with Miss Mary Bosanquet, a woman who was his exact complement; and the two became one according to the evident intention of Him who contrived and established the institution of marriage.

This lady, who, if she had been a Papist, would now be venerated as a saint, and whose name stands first among the women who may be called the deaconesses of Methodism, was born at Laytonstone, in Essex, in 1739. Her family were wealthy, and intended her to shine as a lady of fashion; but while yet a child she became the subject of religious impressions, through the influence of a maid-servant who was one of “the people called Methodists,” and resolved to give herself to a life of devotion. When her parents discovered that she was in danger of becoming a Methodist, for which class of persons they had no small disgust, they dismissed the maid-servant, took away all the books she had given the young lady, and afterward moved to London, where they endeavored to entice her into a life of pleasure. But Mary somehow found out the Methodist Society at the Foundry, and became acquainted with that eminent Christian woman, Mary Ryan, one of Wesley’s class-leaders, by whom she was led to a true knowledge of Christ.

When she became of age her father demanded that she should promise not to attempt to make “Christians” of her brothers, or else leave his house.

The young lady answered, “I think, sir, I dare not consent to that.”

“Then you force me to put you out of my house,” said her father; and accordingly his daughter left her home and took private lodgings



for herself and her maid. She had a little fortune in her own right, and now devoted herself and it to works of charity, becoming first a class-leader and then a *preacher*. In 1763 she removed from London to her native town of Laytonstone, and established in one of her own houses a charity school for orphans, where also she held the meetings of her Methodist Society. In addition to her home duties she made short preaching tours among the neglected sinners of the country round; and so great was her success and so excellent her influence that even Wesley was forced to admit that for *this* woman to speak in the congregation, provided she did not "intrude into the pulpit," was manifestly no shame at all, but only an exception to the general rule, such as St. Paul himself allowed at Corinth.

Fletcher had become acquainted with her at the Old Foundry, when they were in the flower of their youth, and, as afterward transpired, each conceived a deep and tender love for the other; but he was only a tutor in a private family and a very modest young man withal, while Miss Bosanquet was a lady of fortune; therefore he kept his passion to himself for twenty-five years, during the last fifteen of which he never once saw the lady he loved. But in the year 1781 the secret came out, and the lady, who had refused all offers of marriage, was united to one of the most lovable and loving men in all the world. The bride had reached the mature age of forty-two, and the bridegroom that of fifty-two, but their union was none the less perfect on that account, for the love which had been hidden in their hearts had all these years been fitting them for, and bringing them nearer to each other; and thus at a period in life when matrimony is counted a dangerous experiment, these two souls and bodies were happily (shall we say, eternally?) united in one.

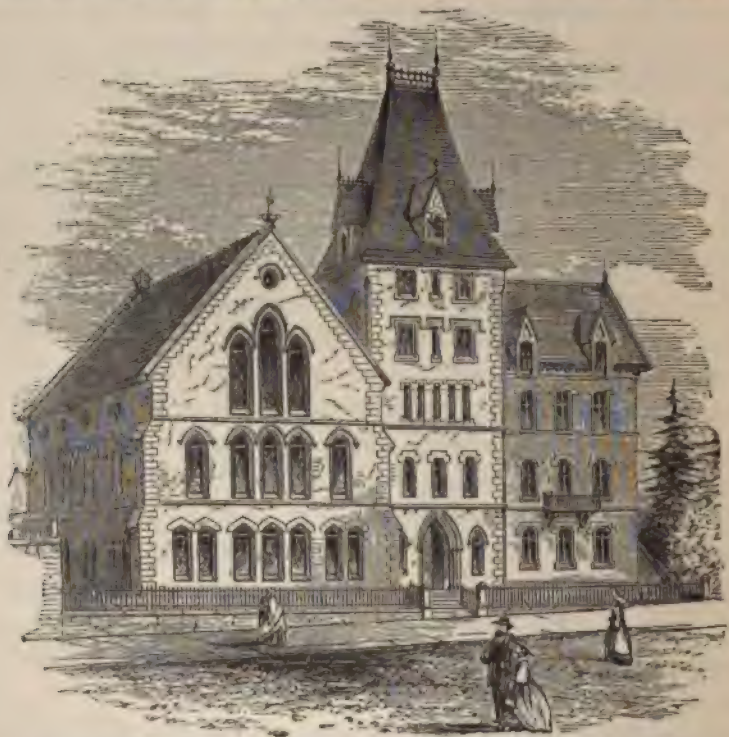
During the brief period of their married life at Madeley Mrs. Fletcher entered heartily into the labors of her husband; built a number of chapels for the poor, and thus established a little diocese or circuit of their own, within which the Gospel so fully triumphed that those who traveled through it years afterward were often reminded of the labors of the saintly vicar and his devoted and talented wife.

On the 14th of August, 1785, less than five years after his marriage, this almost peerless Christian of modern times died of pulmonary consumption; let us rather say, he was promoted to a higher life. But



his work was left in competent hands. For thirty years Mrs. Fletcher continued to be the center of a wide circle of gospel work, in which her fortune, her talents, and her piety made her pre-eminent. Next after the Countess of Huntingdon she was doubtless the most notable, as well as the most widely useful Christian lady of her time. Her death occurred December 9, 1814.

The profound love and admiration in which Mr. Wesley held his friend the Vicar of Madeley is shown in his intention to make Mr.



THE FLETCHER MEMORIAL COLLEGE AND CHAPEL AT LAUSANNE.

Fletcher his successor as head of the United Methodist Societies. This momentous proposal Fletcher received in 1773; but wanting health for so grand a work, and, what was of more consequence, wanting a sense of a divine call thereto, he declined the offer; and the event proved his call to be even a higher one than that of Mr. Wesley, for, instead of succeeding that great man, he preceded him by six years in his entrance upon the ministrations of heaven.



**The Fletcher Memorial College and Chapel**, erected at Lausanne, in Switzerland, is one of the many monuments to the name and fame of this saintly man. The Lausanne Mission, which was commenced in 1840, although afflicted by divisions and persecutions, both political and theological, is now the center of a large and growing interest, and the seat of a training college for the French Wesleyan preachers.

**Revolt of the American Colonies.\***—The great enthusiasm with which the Methodist missions to America had been commenced was shortly chilled by the mutterings of the War of the Revolution. Mr. Wesley, with whom loyalty to the King was a part of his religion, and who had now come to be one of the most influential men in the kingdom, was at first understood to be in sympathy with the colonists, and it was also well known that he was an ardent advocate of peace. In two powerful sermons at the old Foundry he pleaded for amicable settlement with the rebels in America; but shortly afterward a pamphlet written by the famous Dr. Johnson, entitled "Taxation no Tyranny," fell into his hands, and turned him so completely about that he revised the piece, making it better in several respects, as shorter, plainer, and less spiteful, and then published it in his own name, under the title of "A Calm Address to our American Colonies."



DR. JOHNSON.

Johnson and Wesley were good friends, and it is to be presumed that the above piece of business was fully understood between them. In his version of the case, Johnson declared the colonists to be "a race of convicts, who ought to be thankful for any thing we allow them, short of hanging." Wesley's own recollections of Georgia were much to the same purpose; therefore it is not to be wondered at that he should incline to the opinion that these persons, who had

\* For the account of the Methodist missionaries to America, see Part II. of this volume.



for many years enjoyed the clemency as well as the bounty of the mother country, ought now to be willing to do something toward paying back the money which it had cost to establish and defend them in their new homes across the sea.

Of the northern colonies Wesley had little understanding, and what he had was misunderstanding. He knew that they were sinners and needed the Gospel; and he could not comprehend how Christian people anywhere could get along without a king. He forgot how small were the thanks which the sons of the pilgrim fathers owed the British crown, and that instead of owing money to King George and his Lords and Commons, the money debt was largely on the other side, for the costly help they rendered in fighting his French enemies in Canada, with whom, but for King and Parliament, they might have lived in peace. If John Wesley could have made a preaching tour with his old friend Whitefield from Savannah to Boston he would have saved himself the labor of rewriting and republishing Dr. Johnson's plea, and have saved his friends in America no small trouble besides.

**The Courtesies of Debate.**—These were days of great plainness of speech. Persons calling themselves gentlemen and Christians were not above using the most violent and scurrilous language in pamphlets and newspapers against those who differed from them in opinion. Mr. Wesley had often suffered such abuse from his Calvinistic and High-Church enemies, though his own courtesy in debate was worthy of closer imitation. Perhaps some allowance ought to be made for his adversaries on account of their sufferings under his terrible logic; and having so little else with which to answer, it was only natural that they should rave and scold. But now the arch-Methodist had been caught in his own trap. He had at first committed himself to the cause of the colonists, and now he was out in a tract espousing the side of the King!

Why should John Wesley change his opinions? We never do.

Thereupon the whole pack, with the pious Toplady at their head, rushed after their dreaded antagonist in full cry. They called him bad names; they charged him with bad motives; said he was trying to win royal favor for himself and for his friends; charged him with "stealing the thunder" of the Johnsonian Jove; and, not content with hard words, the Rev. Toplady, smarting under the con-



roversial wounds lately received at Wesley's hand, published a tract against him under the very remarkable title of "An Old Fox Tarred and Feathered!" with a frontispiece to match, representing Mr. Wesley as Reynard in spectacles, gown, and bands.

It is not easy to discern the exact force of the figurative language used in the title of this remarkable piece, since foxes in this country are not usually tarred and feathered; but perhaps the reverend gentleman's spite got the better of his rhetoric, and thereby mixed his figures a little. Why he should have been inflamed with such a sudden fury of affection for the rebellious colonists is also a fair question, and one equally difficult to answer, except on the theory that he did not love his King the less, but hated John Wesley more. And this is the very same Toplady who wrote that glorious hymn—



GEORGE III.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in thee."

Some of Mr. Wesley's friends, as well as his enemies, were inclined to censure him for turning politician. This is a point upon which opinions must differ; but it is certain that the part which he took in this great political struggle made him hosts of enemies. Within three weeks forty thousand copies of his "Calm Address" were printed and put into circulation, and excited so much anger among the English friends of the revolted colonists that they would willingly have burned both him and his Address together: but, on the other hand, the Government were so well pleased with his little tract that copies were ordered to be distributed at the doors of all the metropolitan churches; and it is said that one of the highest officers of State waited upon him, to ask whether the Government could in any way be of service to himself or his people.

Wesley replied that he looked for no favors, and only desired the continuance of civil and religious privileges; but he afterward expressed himself as sorry that he had not requested to be made a



royal missionary, with the privilege of preaching in all the English churches.

It should not be forgotten that Wesley hated war for its own sake, especially civil war, in which sentiment he was far in advance of his time; and it was this sense of the wickedness as well as of the horrors of wholesale political murder that led him to attempt, in the first place, to secure the utmost consideration for the colonists, and, in the second place, to try to mollify the temper of the Americans by pointing out to them what he regarded as the undoubted rights of the King. If this Christian statesman could have had his way, neither party would have been wholly pleased, but there would have been no war; and thus the history of Christendom would have been spared the bloody record of seven years of outrage on the one hand, and seven years of misery on the other.

In his charity sermon on the 12th of November, 1775, "For the Benefit of the Widows and Orphans of the Soldiers who Lately Fell near Boston, in New England," Wesley speaks of the terrible distress from which the nation was suffering. He declared that he knew families who a few years ago lived in an easy, genteel manner, but who were now driven to picking up the turnips which the cattle had left in the fields, and which they boiled if they could get a few sticks for that purpose, or otherwise ate them raw. "Thousands," said he, "have screamed for liberty until they are utterly distracted. In every town are men who were once of a calm, mild, friendly temper, who are now hot with party zeal, foaming with rage against their quiet neighbors, ready to tear out one another's throats, and plunge swords into each other's bowels." He then proceeds to denounce in withering terms the sins of the nation—money-getting, lying, gluttony, idleness, and profanity: to which now threatened to be added the final horror of civil war.

As further proof of Wesley's good faith in this mixed matter, the following letter to Lord North will be of interest:—

"ARMAGH, June 15, 1775.

"MY LORD: Whether my writing do any good or no, it need do no harm; for it rests with your lordship whether any eye but your own shall see it.



"I do not enter upon the question whether the Americans are in the right or in the wrong. Here all my prejudices are against the Americans; for I am a High-churchman, the son of a High-churchman, bred up from my childhood in the highest notions of passive obedience and non-resistance; and yet, in spite of all my long-rooted prejudices, I cannot avoid thinking, if I think at all, that an oppressed people asked for nothing more than their legal rights, and that in the most modest and inoffensive manner that the nature of the thing would allow. But, waiving all considerations of right or wrong, I ask, Is it common sense to use force toward the Americans? These men will not be frightened; and it seems they will not be conquered so easily as was at first imagined. They will probably dispute every inch of ground; and if they die, die sword in hand. Indeed, some of our valiant officers say, 'Two thousand men will clear America of these rebels.' No, nor twenty thousand, be they rebels or not, nor perhaps treble that number. They are as strong men as you; they are as valiant as you, if not abundantly more valiant, for they are one and all enthusiasts—enthusiasts for liberty. They are calm, deliberate enthusiasts; and we know how this principle 'breathes into softer souls stern love of war, and thirst of vengeance, and contempt of death.' We know men animated with this spirit will leap into a fire or rush into a cannon's mouth.

"'But they have no experience in war.' And how much more have our troops? Very few of them ever saw a battle. 'But they have no discipline.' That is an entire mistake. Already they have near as much as our army, and they will learn more of it every day; so that in a short time, if the fatal occasion continue, they will understand it as well as their assailants. 'But they are divided among themselves.' No, my lord, they are terribly united; not in the province of New England only, but down as low as the Jerseys and Pennsylvania. The bulk of the people are so united that to speak a word in favor of the present English measures would almost endanger a man's life. Those who informed me of this are no sycophants; they say nothing to curry favor; they have nothing to gain or lose by me. But they speak with sorrow of heart what they have seen with their own eyes and heard with their own ears.

"These men think, one and all, be it right or wrong, that they



are contending *pro aris et focis*: for their wives, children, and liberty. What an advantage have they herein over many that fight only for pay!—none of whom care a straw for the cause wherein they are engaged; most of whom strongly disapprove of it. Have they not another considerable advantage? Is there occasion to recruit troops? Their supplies are at hand, and all round about them. Ours are three thousand miles off. Are we; then, able to conquer the Americans, suppose they are left to themselves, suppose all our neighbors should stand stock still, and leave us and them to fight it out? But we are not sure of this. For are we sure that all our neighbors will stand stock still? I doubt they have not promised it; and if they had, could we rely upon those promises? ‘Yet it is not probable they will send ships or men to America.’ Is there not a shorter way? Do they not know where England and Ireland lie? And have they not troops, as well as ships, in readiness? All Europe is well apprised of this; only the English know nothing of the matter! What if they find means to land but two thousand men? Where are the troops in England or Ireland to oppose them? Why, cutting the throats of their brethren in America! Poor England, in the meantime!

“‘But we have our militia—our valiant, disciplined militia. These will effectually oppose them.’ Give me leave, my lord, to relate a little circumstance, of which I was informed by a clergymen who knew the fact. In 1716 a large body of militia were marching toward Preston against the rebels. In a wood which they were passing by a boy happened to discharge his fowling-piece. The soldiers gave up all for lost, and, by common consent, threw down their arms and ran for life. So much dependence is to be placed on our valorous militia.

“But, my lord, this is not all. We have thousands of enemies perhaps more dangerous than French or Spaniards. As I travel four or five thousand miles every year I have an opportunity of conversing freely with more persons of every denomination than any one else in the three kingdoms. I cannot but know the general disposition of the people—English, Scots, and Irish; and I know a large majority of them are exasperated almost to madness. Exactly so they were throughout England and Scotland about the year 1640, and, in a great measure, by the same means; by inflammatory papers which



## REVOLT OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES.

were spread, as they are now, with the utmost diligence in every corner of the land. Hereby the bulk of the population was usually cured of all love and reverence for the King. So despising, then hating him, they were just ripe for open rebellion. And, I assure your lordship, so they are now. They want not but a leader.

"Two circumstances more are deserving to be considered: the one, that there was at that time a decay of general trade almost throughout the kingdom; the other, there was a scarcity of provisions. The case is the same in both respects now. So that even now there are multitudes of people that have nothing to do, and nothing to eat, are ready for the first bidder, without inquiring into the merits of the case, would flock to any man that would give them bread.

"Upon the whole, I am really sometimes afraid that there is too much to be feared from the Lord. When I consider the astounding luxury of the rich and the shocking impiety of rich and poor, I doubt whether the general dissoluteness of manners does not demand a general visitation. Perhaps the decree is already gone forth from the Governor of the world. Perhaps even now—

" 'As he that buys, surveys a ground,  
So the destroying angel measures it around.  
Calm he surveys the perishing nation,  
Ruin behind him stalks, and empty desolation.'

"But we Englishmen are too wise to acknowledge that God has any thing to do in the world! Otherwise should we not seek him by fasting and prayer, before he lets the lifted thunder drop? O, my lord, if your lordship can do any thing, let it not be wanting! For God's sake, for the sake of the King, of the nation, of your lovely family, remember Rehoboam! Remember Philip the Second! Remember King Charles the First!

"I am, with true regard, my lord, your lordship's obedient servant,  
"JOHN WESLEY."

"Whatever," says Mr. Tyerman, "may be thought of the principle advocated in Wesley's 'Calm Address to the American Colonies,' namely, that taxation without representation is no tyranny, there



can be no doubt that his letters to the Premier and to the Colonial Secretary are full of warnings and foresight which were terribly fulfilled; and for fidelity, fullness, and terseness, were perhaps without a parallel in the correspondence of these ministers of State." This bold address added fuel to the fire, notwithstanding one of his reviewers declares it to be "as dry as an old piece of leather that has been tanned five thousand times over;" while the preacher himself was denounced as "a tip-top perfectionist in the art of lying."

**More Wesleyan Politics.**—The "Calm Address to the Colonists" produced such a sensation that in 1777 Mr. Wesley was moved to issue another "Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England," in which he endeavors to convince his countrymen that they are already in the enjoyment of greater liberties than are the colonists who are fighting for freedom, that, in the confederate provinces of America, after bawling for liberty, no liberty is left; that liberty of the press, religious liberty and civil liberty are nonentities; that the lords of Congress are as absolute as the Emperor of Morocco; whereas in England the fullest liberty is enjoyed as to religion, life, body, and goods. He confesses that there are some Methodists who hate the King and all his ministers, but as for himself, he would no more continue in fellowship with such persons than with Sabbath-breakers, or thieves, or common swearers.

For once in his life Wesley's loyalty outran his common sense. Almost immediately his enemies rushed into print to abuse him, representing him as "spouting venom," calling him "Father Johnnie," accusing him of telling barefaced lies; and in the "Gospel Magazine" a poem was published, reviling him in unmeasured terms, closing with this couplet:—

"O think of this, thou gray-haired sinner,  
When Satan picks thy bones for dinner."

**Rowland Hill vs. John Wesley.**—At the laying of the corner-stone of the City Road Chapel Mr. Wesley re-asserted the loyalty of himself and his followers to the Established Church of England. He made also an unhappy reference to the separation between himself and the late Mr. Whitefield, (an account of whose closing years and death in America will be found in Part II.,) because of the strong prejudice of the latter against the Church, into which



state of mind that good man had been beguiled by conversing with Dissenters.

As might have been expected, this roused the fury of some of his old antagonists, and the Rev. Rowland Hill rushed into print with a scurrilous pamphlet of forty pages, entitled, "Imposture Detected, and the Dead Vindicated; in a Letter to a Friend: containing some gentle Strictures on the False and Libelous Harangue lately delivered by Mr. John Wesley, upon his laying the first stone of his new Dissenting Meeting-house, near the City Road." Wesley's sermon is described as "a wretched harangue, from which the blessed name of Jesus is almost



*Rowland Hill*

totally excluded." "By only erasing about half a dozen lines from the whole," says the Rev. Mr. Hill, "I might defy the shrewdest of his readers to discover whether the *lying apostle* of the Foundry be a Jew, a Papist, a Pagan, or a Turk." He speaks of "the late ever-memorable Mr. Whitefield" being "scratched out of his grave by the claws of a designing wolf," meaning, of course, Wesley: he brands Wesley as "a libeler," "a dealer in stolen wares," and "as being as unprincipled as a rook and as silly as a jackdaw, first pilfering his neighbor's plumage, and then going proudly forth, displaying his borrowed tail



to the eyes of a laughing world." "Persons that are toad-eaters to Mr. John Wesley stand in need of very wide throats, and that which he wishes them to swallow is enough to choke an elephant." "Venom distills from his graceless pen." "Mr. Whitefield is blackened by the venomous quill of this gray-headed enemy to all righteousness." "Wesley is a cruel slanderer, an unfeeling reviler, a liar of the most gigantic magnitude, a wretch, a miscreant apostate, whose perfection consists in his perfect hatred of all goodness and good men." "You cannot love the Church unless you go to Wesley's meeting-house; nor be a friend to the established bishops, priests, and deacons, unless you admire Wesley's ragged legion of preaching barbers, cobblers, tinkers, scavengers, draymen, and chimney-sweepers!"

The "Gospel Magazine," under the editorship of the touchy Toplady, joined in the cry against his old adversary, and justified the brutality of the pamphlet in question by saying, "When you take Old Nick by the nose it must be with a pair of red-hot tongs." "The truth is," says this "gospel" editor, "Mr. Whitefield was too much a Churchman for Mr. Wesley's fanaticism to digest. O ye deluded followers of this horrid man, God open your eyes, and pluck your feet out of the net, lest ye sink into the threefold ditch of antichristian error, of foul Antinomianism, and of eternal misery at last!"

Mr. Wesley replied in a manner the courtesy of which is remarkable when it is considered that his two vilifiers were then a couple of audacious young aspirants for controversial fame, while Wesley was a venerable clergyman of seventy-four years of age, a great religious leader, a man of boundless self-sacrifice, and one of the best scholars and most highly respected gentlemen of his time.

Like the two lions encountered by Bunyan's Pilgrim, High-churchism and High-Calvinism roared and raged at the chief of all the Methodists, whose greatest offense was his unapproachable success: but like those other savage beasts, these also were chained, one by divine providence, and the other by divine grace. A general howl now arose against "that old fox," as Mr. Wesley was called: satires, tracts, plays, squibs, and every imaginable indignity in words, were poured out against him, as if a menagerie had been stampeded, and all the beasts were trying which could most loudly assert itself. To all this abuse, which was raised by his simple statement of a fact in the life of



his friend and pupil, and which was no slander whether it were false or true, Mr. Wesley replied briefly, defending the correctness of his assertions, but never suffering himself to lose his temper in the debate. "Where," he asks, in one of his letters to his traducers, "have I, in one single sentence, returned them railing for railing? I have not so learned Christ. I dare not rail, either at them or you. I return not cursing, but blessing. That the God of love may bless them and you is the prayer of your injured, yet still affectionate brother, John Wesley."

Thus did "Pope John," as Toplady spitefully calls him, vindicate his character as well as his cause.

Mr. Tyerman almost apologizes for setting forth such unpleasant facts, which are necessarily so damaging to the opponents of Methodism, but by such a showing he has done good service to the Church. Hill, Toplady, and the rest were public men, and had no right to hide their heads when there were blows to take as well as blows to give, nor can their theological successors complain if their memory pays the penalty due to their offense. Even in our day men are sometimes denounced as liars for telling unpleasant truths.

But there is another value to these records of the bitterness and personal vulgarity so painfully apparent in the religious controversies of those days. These hard words serve as mile-stones to mark the progress of Christendom in taste and temper. The great religious leaders of our own time are sometimes attacked with scurrility and traduced with infamous slanders; still it is not done by professed Christians in "Gospel Magazines," but by atheists and apostates in columns which beyond mistake are published in the interest of sin. As tested by the temper of doctrinal debate, Christian cultivation has doubtless made great progress in the last hundred years.

**City Road Chapel.**—In spite of all the excitements and commotions with which England, as well as the colonies, was distracted during the years of the American war, Methodism continued to prosper. Preaching-houses were springing up all over England and Wales, and the Old Foundry in London was overwhelmed with people. The London Methodists were also now more wealthy as well as more numerous, and there was an evident occasion for a more churchly edifice in the British capital. Besides this, Mr. Wesley only held a



lease of the Foundry, and at its expiration, which would now soon occur, the building was to be pulled down; he therefore started a subscription for a "New Foundry," and at three public meetings raised for that purpose the sum of a thousand pounds. In April, 1777, the corner-stone of the building was laid, and on Sunday, November 1, 1778, it was opened for public worship. The design was to build "an elegant chapel, such as even the Lord-Mayor might attend without any diminishing of his official dignity," and that it should be wholly supplied by ordained clergymen of the Established Church on Sundays, when the liturgy should be constantly read at both morning and



CITY ROAD CHAPEL.

evening service. No layman, so-called—that is, no itinerant preacher not episcopally ordained—was allowed to officiate within its walls, except on week-days. Charles Wesley, Thomas Coke, and John Richardson were to be its only Sabbatic priests; Pawson, Rankin, Tennent, Olivers, and others, though better preachers than any of the trio not being admitted, because their heads had not been "touched by a bishop's fingers." \*

The result of this arrangement, however, was a great falling off in congregations, until the trustees of the chapel waited on Charles

\* TYERMAN'S "Life of Wesley."



Wesley with a request that he would not preach so often at City Road Chapel, as the New Foundry was called—from the name of the street in which it stood—but would sometimes allow the lay preachers to take his place. Poor Charles reluctantly submitted, but he wrote to his brother, casting all the blame on the poor Dissenters, and stating that it was wholly owing to their deep-rooted prejudices against the clergy of the Established Church that these events had transpired.

For many years the men sat on one side of the chapel and the



INTERIOR OF PRESENT CITY ROAD CHAPEL, LONDON.

women on the other, and although large numbers paid for seats, no one was allowed to call a seat or a pew his own.

Mr. Wesley thought highly of his taste and judgment in matters of church architecture, and the New Foundry was the best realization of his views ever attained. So well pleased was he with it that he would have been glad to have it prescribed as the model after which all other Methodist chapels should be built; and, indeed, such it was for many years, its plain and simple front having more duplicates than any other building ever erected for the worship of God, unless it



might be the "octagon chapels," of which occasional mention is made in early Methodist annals. As a specimen of that extinct species of architecture may be mentioned the Methodist chapel at Heptonstall, an edifice erected in 1797 in the rough country near the forest of Hardwick, famous in history and song as the scene of the wild exploits of Robin Hood. On account of its peculiar shape there were no carpenters in the country round who were equal to the task of constructing a roof to cover it, and that essential portion of the structure had to be made elsewhere and brought to the place in wagons; its arrival being celebrated with special religious service; after which, crowds of people, both men and women, sought for the privilege of helping to put the mysterious sky-piece of their chapel together.

**A Decline.**—The Conference of 1779 showed a decrease of membership in twenty of the circuits, including London. The reasons assigned were—

"1. Partly the neglect of outdoor preaching, and of trying new places. 2. Partly prejudice against the King, and speaking evil of dignities. 3. But chiefly the increase of worldly-mindedness and conformity to the world. It was also resolved that no one speaking evil of those in authority, or prophesying evil to the nation, should be a Methodist preacher. Itinerants were reprov'd for hastening home to their wives after preaching; and were told they ought never to do this till they had met the Society. To revive the work in Scotland the preachers were directed to preach in the open air as much as possible, to try every town and village, and to visit every member of Society at home."

Besides all this there were internal troubles, which were caused by the peevishness and pretensions of Charles Wesley, who could never forget that himself and his brother were ordained clergymen, and that the itinerant preachers were not. John Pawson, one of the chiefs, has left this striking record:—

"I was perhaps as well acquainted with the two brothers as any man now living. That Mr. Charles Wesley was of a very suspicious temper is certainly true; and that Mr. John Wesley had far more charity in judging of persons in general (except the rich and great) than his brother had is equally true; but that he was so apt to be taken in with appearances is not true. He was well able to form a



judgment of particular persons, and was as seldom mistaken as his brother. I once heard him pleasantly say: 'My brother suspects every body, and he is continually imposed upon; but I suspect nobody, and I am never imposed upon.' It is well known that Mr. Charles Wesley was much prejudiced in favor of the clergy through the whole course of his life, and that it was nothing but hard necessity that obliged him in any degree to continue the lay preachers. He must have been blind indeed not to have seen that God had given to many of them, at least, very considerable ministerial gifts, and that he attended their labors with great success; but I am well persuaded that, could he have found a sufficient number of clergymen to have carried on the work of God, he would soon have disowned all the lay preachers.

"Mr. Charles was inclined to find out and magnify any supposed fault in the lay preachers; but his brother treated them with respect, and exercised a fatherly care over them. I am persuaded that from the creation of the world there never existed a body of men who looked up to any single person with a more profound degree of reverence than the preachers did to Mr. Wesley; and I am bold to say that never did any man, no, not St. Paul himself, possess so high a degree of power over so large a body of men as was possessed by him. He used his power, however, for the edification of the people, and abused it as little, perhaps, as any one man ever did. When any difficulty occurred in governing the preachers it soon vanished. The oldest, the very best, and those of them that had the greatest influence, were ever ready to unite with him, and to assist him to the utmost of their power. The truth is, if the preachers were in any danger at all, it was of calling Mr. Wesley 'Rabbi,' and implicitly obeying him in whatsoever he thought proper to command."

But there was another side to this picture. The body of preachers had now increased to one hundred and sixty men, among whom were some who began to demand a voice in the matter of their appointments, which claim Mr. Wesley would not allow for one moment, and in 1779 expelled one of his best preachers, Alexander M'Nabb, for setting up the view that it was the Conference, and not Mr. Wesley, by whom the appointments were made. At the Conference of 1779 this excellent man had been appointed to the Bristol Circuit, which



included Bath: but not long after a Rev. Mr. Smyth, from the north of Ireland, brought his wife to Bath for the benefit of her health, and Mr. Wesley, who knew and admired him, desired that he should preach at the Methodist chapel in that town every Sunday evening. Against this Mr. M'Nabb rebelled, and in consequence was informed that there was no more call for his services as a Methodist preacher "till he was of another mind." "Above all," says Wesley, "you are to preach when and where I appoint."

By this unhappy event the Bath Society was torn to pieces, and Wesleyan Methodism itself narrowly escaped a similar fate. However, there was only one John Wesley in the world, and he would not be in it long. His preachers loved him as a father while they honored him as a spiritual ruler: thus the crisis passed without a schism, and the sturdy autocrat of all the Methodists still retained his crozier, holding it all the more firmly, perhaps, because it was now so evident that he had learned to handle the sword.

In any compact and aggressive body, be it civil, military, or religious, the very first requisite is a man who *can* command. There are plenty of men who can scold, and strut, against whose show of power it is natural for brave spirits to rebel. Such a one will not be long in sinking to his proper level; but when a great, true man appears, who has the element of authority in him—who by natural might, as well as by acquired right, can secure obedience through the power of a regal will—that man is admired by those who possess the heroic spirit, and, instead of fretting at his orders, they are proud to obey them. It is not patriotism in the soldier to raise rebellion against the general-in-chief, neither is it love of the Church which leads restless spirits therein to denounce the power and governments which are founded in divine providence and the eternal fitness of things.

Mr. M'Nabb, his friends and his successors, may all have been great men, but at this distance of time they appear to have been small enough to lose themselves in the confusion they raised over the question of which of two men should have the privilege of preaching for a few months in the Methodist chapel at Bath. This man owed to John Wesley, under God, the opportunity of being a Methodist preacher at all: it was Wesley who gave him the Bath pulpit, to be held subject to Wesley's direction until he should fill it with some other man.



But M'Nabb, once in his place, rebelled against the orders of his superior, from whom he was willing enough to receive favors, but whom he was not willing to obey. It does not help his reputation that he attempted to make his case a representative one, and thus became the head of a party of revolt in the Conference against its rightful chief. Selfish ambition never loses an opportunity of intrenching itself behind some "great principle," and has large and respectable names for petty jealousies. Fortunately Wesley was equal to the occasion: he took off the epaulets of this mutinous lieutenant, and the Methodism of Great Britain honored him for the act.

Some of Wesley's biographers plead for him in this case as if he were an offender entitled to mercy by reason of his previous good character; let it rather be set down to his praise that he had the sagacity and the courage to maintain his god-given prerogative, and thus to take his place in Methodist history not as a politician but as a king.

In the following year Mr. M'Nabb was reinstated in the ministry, much to the disgust of Charles Wesley, and his subsequent appointments were honorable both to Mr. Wesley and himself. If Wesley was great in his authority, he was still greater in his magnanimity.

**Strength of Methodism in 1780.**—During the ten years from 1770 to 1780 Methodism increased with encouraging rapidity. The following are the figures: in 1770 the number of circuits, was 50; the number of itinerant preachers, 123; the number of members, 29,406. In the year 1780, the number of circuits, was 64; of preachers, 171; and of members, 43,830. There was also a corresponding increase in the amount of money raised for education and charity. The above is exclusive of the West Indian missions, and the 42 preachers and 8,504 members in America.





THE MAN-OF-WAR CLASS-MEETING.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### A WORTHY CLIMAX TO A GLORIOUS CAREER.

IN his old age John Wesley was one of the most honored as well as influential men in the three kingdoms. Methodism had now become an established fact—a leading feature in the religious life of Great Britain; and the furious opposition which it at first encountered, not only from the rabble but also from certain of the magistrates and clergy, had given place to toleration and respect.

In 1784 there were no less than three hundred and fifty-nine Methodist chapels in England, Ireland, and Scotland, besides unnumbered regular preaching places of a humbler style. There were Methodist local preachers in large numbers both in the army and navy; and the hymns of Charles Wesley were sung with heartiness and pathos at many a class-meeting in His Majesty's barracks, and between the decks of His Majesty's men-of-war.



**Wesley's Clerical Friends.**—Success always carries with it a certain dignity which commands respect, and when that success is in the highest possible line of effort, namely, the preaching of the Gospel for the salvation of souls, it carries with it also the presumption that he who achieves it is favored in heaven as well as honored among men. No Englishman had ever received such tokens of the divine favor as those which on all hands surrounded this chief Methodist, and it was now quite safe, and even popular, to profess a high opinion both of the man and his work.

There were even a few of the clergy of the Establishment who claimed friendship with him, though they would not have carried that friendship so far as to invite him into their pulpits. Even the saintly Fletcher of Madeley, though he opened his heart to Wesley, was somewhat trammelled by his churchly relations, and could not at all times meet him as a clergyman on equal terms. But that was a trifling matter to a man who had hundreds of pulpits of his own; that is to say, as much his own as the pulpits of his clerical friends were their own.

Besides this faithful friend and brave defender, Wesley had a few loving brethren scattered in parish Churches over the kingdom, or doing the work of evangelists after a fashion of their own. Among these was his old friend and counselor, Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham; Henry Venn, Curate of Clapham; Martin Madan, the brilliant evangelist; the wealthy and generous Berridge, Vicar of Everton; the scholarly and zealous Romaine, one of Lady Huntingdon's chaplains, and afterward Rector of St. Andrew's in London; and Grimshaw, of Haworth, whose name appears several times in the records of Mr. Wesley's conferences. These men, with perhaps a few others, had the sagacity to perceive and the piety to confess that John Wesley was not a worse but a better son of the Church for being also a Methodist; and well would it have been for all concerned if this view of the case could have prevailed in all the circles of churchly power.

**Wesleyan Ordinations.**—The close of the War of the Revolution, resulting in the Independence of the American Colonies, rendered some action necessary on Mr. Wesley's part to save the Methodist Societies in America from losing their connectional character. His ordination of Thomas Coke as "Superintendent of the Methodist So-



cieties in America," being a vital portion of the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, an account thereof will be given in the second part of this volume. It was an act by which Wesley placed himself officially at the head of the Methodist body of which he was the actual head before, and one for which he has been both honored and condemned.

Having now taken the momentous first step, the second was comparatively easy, and in July, 1785, he "set apart three well-trying preachers"—John Pawsón, Thomas Hanby, and Joseph Taylor, to minister in Scotland.

The remainder of Wesley's ordinations Mr. Tyerman dismisses in a single paragraph, as follows:—

"A year afterward, at the Conference of 1786, he ordained Joshua Keighley and Charles Atmore, for Scotland; William Warrenner, for Antigua; and William Hammet, for Newfoundland. A year later five others were ordained; in 1778, when Wesley was in Scotland, John Barber and Joseph Cownley received ordination at his hands; and at the ensuing conference seven others, including Alexander Mather, who was ordained to the office not only of deacon and elder, but of *superintendent*. On Ash Wednesday, in 1789, Wesley ordained Henry Moore and Thomas Rankin; and this, we believe, completes the list of those upon whom Mr. Wesley laid his hands. All these ordinations were in private; and many of them at four o'clock in the morning. Some of the favored ones were intended for Scotland, some for foreign missions, and a few, as Mather, Moore, and Rankin, were employed in England. In most instances, probably in all, they were ordained deacons on one day and on the day following received the ordination of elders, Wesley giving to each letters testimonial."

#### **Alexander Mather Ordained as Superintendent.—**

But what was that office of "*superintendent*" to which Alexander Mather was ordained? and why is this "*superintendent*" classed with the "seven others" who were only ordained as "deacons" and "elders?"

If the British Methodist Conference had not rejected the "*superintendent*" whom *Bishop* Wesley ordained, and by which act he showed his intention of continuing in England, as well as of setting up in America, an episcopal form of Church government, the "*Life*



and Times of John Wesley," by his otherwise most admirable historian, would, doubtless, have contained something more than the above hasty dismissal of Wesleyan ordination, whose more extended treatment may be found in Part II of this volume.

Mr. Wesley's clerical friends were greatly offended at these ordinations, by which the modern usage of the Church of England was transgressed, and Charles Wesley pours out his grief in a strain which is, however, less pathetic than amusing. In a letter of his under date of April 28, 1785, the following mournful words occur:—

"What are your poor Methodists now? Only a new sect of Presbyterians. And after my brother's death, which is now so near, what will be their end? They will lose all their influence and importance; they will turn aside to vain janglings; they will settle again upon their lees; and, like other sects of Dissenters, come to nothing."

It is a significant fact, that although Wesley was blamed by certain clerical authorities for taking upon himself to perform the functions which, by common consent, were the exclusive prerogative of the bishops, yet, upon his public statement of his traditional as well as providential right as a presbyter of the Church of England and the head of "the people called Methodists" to ordain a ministry for them, no one ventured to summon him before an ecclesiastical court to be tried for breach of Church discipline; which is strong presumption that on a private and careful review of his conduct, and of the arguments with which he defended it, the Church authorities were convinced that Wesley was right. Whatever the private conclusions may have been, the plain and simple fact remains, that no official notice was taken of Wesley's acts of ordination, and from first to last he remained an unchallenged member of the English Church.

**The Deed of Declaration.**—Another great event in this eventful decade (1775–85) was the legal establishment of the Methodist Conference by Mr. Wesley's famous "Deed of Declaration."—

At the time of the Leeds Conference, in 1784, there were three hundred and fifty-nine Methodist chapels in Great Britain, the most of which, if not all, were held by trustees under the provisions of the so-called "Deed of Settlement," drawn up by Mr. Wesley, which provided that these premises should always be held for the free use of Mr. Wesley and the preachers whom he should, from time to time,



appoint to preach in them. In the event of his death this right was secured to his brother Charles, and then to the Rev. William Grimshaw, provided he outlived Charles Wesley, and after the death of these three persons the chapels were to be held in trust for the use of such ministers as might be appointed at the "yearly Conference of the people called Methodists," provided they preached no other doctrines than those contained in Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, and his four volumes of sermons. "The yearly Conference of the people called Methodists" was a phrase which needed a legal definition, and it was to furnish such definition that, on the 28th of February, 1784, Mr. Wesley executed the famous "Deed of Declaration," which, a few days after, was enrolled at the High Court of Chancery, and thenceforth became the legal Charter or Constitution of the Wesleyan Methodist Societies.

#### THE DEED OF DECLARATION.

TO ALL to whom these presents shall come, JOHN WESLEY, late of Lincoln College, *Oxford*, but now of the *City Road*, London, Clerk, sendeth greeting:

WHEREAS divers buildings, commonly called chapels, with a messuage and dwelling-house, or other appurtenances, to each of the same belonging, situate in various parts of Great Britain, have been given and conveyed, from time to time, by the said John Wesley to certain persons and their heirs, in each of the said gifts and conveyances named; which are enrolled in His Majesty's High Court of Chancery, upon the acknowledgment of the said John Wesley, (pursuant to the Act of Parliament in that case made and provided,) UPON TRUST, that the trustees in the said several deeds respectively named, and the survivors of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being, to be elected as in the said deeds is appointed, should permit and suffer the said John Wesley, and such other person and persons as he should for that purpose from time to time nominate and appoint, at all times during his life, at his will and pleasure to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of the said premises, that he the said John Wesley, and such person or persons as he should nominate and appoint, might therein preach and expound God's holy word: and upon further trust, that the said respective trustees, and the survivors of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being, should permit and suffer Charles Wesley, brother of the said John Wesley, and such other person and persons as the said Charles Wesley should for that purpose from time to time nominate and appoint, in like manner during his life, to have, use, and enjoy the said premises respectively for the like purposes as aforesaid: and after the decease of the survivor of them, the said John Wesley and Charles Wesley, then upon further trust, that the said respective trustees, and the survivors of them, and



their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being forever, should permit and suffer such person and persons, and for such time and times, as should be appointed at the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists in London, Bristol, or Leeds, and no others, to have and enjoy the said premises for the purposes aforesaid: and whereas divers persons have, in like manner, given or conveyed many chapels, with messuages and dwelling-houses, or other appurtenances, to the same belonging, situate in various parts of Great Britain, and also in Ireland, to certain trustees, in each of the said gifts and conveyances respectively named, upon the like trusts, and for the same uses and purposes as aforesaid, (except only that in some of the said gifts and conveyances, no life estate or other interest is therein or thereby given and reserved to the said Charles Wesley:) and whereas, for rendering effectual the trusts created by the said several gifts or conveyances, and that no doubt or litigation may arise with respect unto the same, or the interpretation and true meaning thereof, it has been thought expedient, by the said John Wesley, on behalf of himself as donor of the several chapels, with the messuages, dwelling-houses, or appurtenances, before mentioned, as of the donors of the said other chapels, with the messuages, dwelling-houses, or appurtenances, to the same belonging, given or conveyed to the like uses and trusts, to explain the words *Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists*, contained in all the said trust-deeds, and to declare *what persons* are members of the said Conference, and how the *succession* and *identity* thereof is to be continued: *Now therefore these presents witness*, that, for accomplishing the aforesaid purposes, the said John Wesley doth hereby declare, that the Conference of the people called Methodists in London, Bristol, or Leeds, ever since there hath been any yearly Conference of the said people called Methodists, in any of the said places, hath always heretofore consisted of the preachers and expounders of God's holy word, commonly called Methodist preachers, in connection with, and under the care of, the said John Wesley, whom he hath thought expedient year after year to summons to meet him, in one or other of the said places, of London, Bristol, or Leeds, to advise with them for the promotion of the Gospel of Christ, to appoint the said persons so summoned, and the other preachers and expounders of God's holy word, also in connection with, and under the care of, the said John Wesley, not summoned to the said yearly Conference, to the use and enjoyment of the said chapels and premises so given and conveyed upon trust for the said John Wesley, and such other person and persons as he should appoint during his life as aforesaid; and for the expulsion of unworthy and admission of new persons under his care, and into his Connection, to be preachers and expounders as aforesaid; and also of other persons upon trial for the like purposes; the names of all which persons so summoned by the said John Wesley, the persons appointed, with the chapels and premises to which they were so appointed, together with the duration of such appointments, and of those expelled or admitted into Connection or upon trial, with all other matters trans-



acted and done at the said yearly Conference, have, year by year, been printed and published under the title of "Minutes of Conference." *And these presents further witness*, and the said John Wesley doth hereby avouch and further declare, that the several persons hereinafter named, to wit, the said John Wesley and Charles Wesley; Thomas Coke, of the city of London, Doctor of Civil Law; James Creighton, of the same place, Clerk; Thomas Tenant, of the same place; Thomas Rankin, of the same place; Joshua Keighley, of Seven Oaks, in the county of Kent; James Wood, of Rochester, in the said county of Kent; John Booth, of Colchester, Thomas Cooper, of the same place; Richard Whatcoat, of Norwich; Jeremiah Brettell, of Lynn, in the county of Norfolk, Jonathan Parkin, of the same place; Joseph Pescod, of Bedford; Christopher Watkins, of Northampton, John Barber, of the same place; John Broadbent, of Oxford, Joseph Cole, of the same place; Jonathan Cousins, of the city of Gloucester, John Brettell, of the same place; John Mason, of Salisbury, George Story, of the same place; Francis Wrigley, of St. Austell, in the county of Cornwall; William Green, of the city of Bristol; John Moon, of Plymouth-Dock, James Hall, of the same place; James Thom, of St. Austell, aforesaid; Joseph Taylor, of Redruth, in the said county of Cornwall; William Hoskins, of Cardiff, Glamorganshire; John Leech, of Brecon, William Saunders, of the same place; Richard Rodda, of Birmingham; John Fenwick, of Burslem, Staffordshire, Thomas Hanby, of the same place; James Rogers, of Macclesfield, Samuel Bardsley, of the same place; John Murlin, of Manchester, William Percival, of the same place; Duncan Wright, of the city of Chester, John Goodwin, of the same place; Parson Greenwood, of Liverpool, Zechariah Yewdal, of the same place, Thomas Vasey, of the same place; Joseph Bradford, of Leicester, Jeremiah Robertshaw, of the same place; William Myles, of Nottingham; Thomas Longley, of Derby; Thomas Taylor, of Sheffield, William Simpson, of the same place; Thomas Carlill, of Grimsby, in the county of Lincoln, Robert Scott, of the same place, Joseph Harper, of the same place; Thomas Corbett, of Gainsborough, in the said county of Lincoln, James Ray, of the same place; William Thompson, of Leeds, in the county of York, Robert Roberts, of the same place, Samuel Bradburn, of the same place; John Valtou, of Birstal, in the said county, John Allen, of the same place, Isaac Brown, of the same place; Thomas Hanson, of Huddersfield, in the said county, John Shaw, of the same place; Alexander Mather, of Bradford, in the said county; Joseph Benson, of Halifax, in the said county, William Dufton, of the same place; Benjamin Rhodes, of Keighly, in the said county; John Easton, of Colne, in the county of Lancaster, Robert Costerdine, of the same place; Jasper Robinson, of the Isle of Man, George Button, of the same place; John Pawson, of the city of York; Edward Jackson, of Hull; Charles Atmore, of the said city of York; Launcelot Harrison, of Scarborough; George Shadford, of Hull aforesaid; Barnabas Thomas, of the same place; Thomas Briscoe, of Yarm, in the said county of York, Christopher Peacock, of



the same place; William Thom, of Whitby, in the said county of York, Robert Hopkins, of the same place; John Peacock, of Barnard Castle; William Collins, of Sunderland; Thomas Dixon, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Christopher Hopper, of the same place, William Boothby, of the same place; William Hunter, of Berwick-upon-Tweed; Joseph Saunderson, of Dundee, Scotland, William Warrener, of the same place; Duncan M'Allum, of Aberdeen, Scotland; Thomas Rutherford, of the city of Dublin, in the kingdom of Ireland, Daniel Jackson, of the same place; Henry Moore, of the city of Cork, Ireland, Andrew Blair, of the same place; Richard Watkinson, of Limerick, Ireland; Nehemiah Price, of Athlone, Ireland; Robert Lindsay, of Sligo, Ireland; George Brown, of Clones, Ireland; Thomas Barber, of Charlemont, Ireland; Henry Foster, of Belfast, Ireland; and John Crook, of Lisburn, Ireland, gentlemen, being preachers and ex-pounders of God's holy word, under the care and in connection with the said John Wesley, have been, and now are, and do, on the day of the date hereof, constitute *the members of the said Conference*, according to the true intent and meaning of the said several gifts and conveyances, wherein the words *Conference of the people called Methodists* are mentioned and contained. And that the said several persons before-named, and their successors forever, to be chosen as hereinafter mentioned, are and shall forever be construed, taken, and be *the Conference of the people called Methodists*. Nevertheless upon the terms, and subject to the regulations hereinafter prescribed, that is to say,

*First*, That the members of the said Conference, and their successors for the time being forever, shall assemble once in every year, at London, Bristol, or Leeds, (except as after mentioned,) for the purposes aforesaid; and the time and place of holding every subsequent Conference shall be appointed at the preceding one; save that the next Conference after the date hereof shall be holden at Leeds, in Yorkshire, the last Tuesday in July next.

*Second*, The act of the majority in number of the Conference assembled as aforesaid shall be had, taken, and be the act of the whole Conference; to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever.

*Third*, That after the Conference shall be assembled as aforesaid, they shall first proceed to fill up all the vacancies occasioned by death, or absence, as after-mentioned.

*Fourth*, No act of the Conference assembled as aforesaid shall be had, taken, or be the act of the Conference, until forty of the members thereof are assembled, unless reduced under that number by death since the prior Conference, or absence, as after-mentioned; nor until all the vacancies occasioned by death, or absence, shall be filled up by the election of new members of the Conference, so as to make up the number of one hundred, unless there be not a sufficient number of persons objects of such election: and during the assembly of the Conference, there shall always be forty members present at the doing of any act, save as aforesaid, or otherwise such act shall be void.



*Fifth*, The duration of the yearly assembly of the Conference shall not be less than five days, nor more than three weeks, and be concluded by the appointment of the Conference, if under twenty-one days; or otherwise the conclusion thereof shall follow of course at the end of the said twenty-one days; the whole of all which said time of the assembly of the Conference shall be had, taken, considered, and be the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, and all acts of the Conference during such yearly assembly thereof shall be the acts of the Conference, and none other.

*Sixth*, Immediately after all the vacancies occasioned by death, or absence, are filled up by the election of new members as aforesaid, the Conference shall choose a president, and secretary, of their assembly, out of themselves, who shall continue such until the election of another president, or secretary, in the next or other subsequent Conference; and the said president shall have the privilege and power of two members in all acts of the Conference, during his presidency, and such other powers, privileges, and authorities, as the Conference shall from time to time see fit to intrust into his hands.

*Seventh*, Any member of the Conference absenting himself from the yearly assembly thereof for two years successively, without the consent, or dispensation of the Conference, and being not present on the first day of the third yearly assembly thereof at the time and place appointed for the holding of the same, shall cease to be a member of the Conference from and after the said first day of the said third yearly assembly thereof, to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. But the Conference shall and may dispense with, or consent to, the absence of any member from any of the said yearly assemblies, for any cause which the Conference may see fit or necessary; and such member, whose absence shall be so dispensed with, or consented to by the Conference, shall not by such absence cease to be a member thereof.

*Eighth*, The Conference shall and may expel, and put out from being a member thereof, or from being in connection therewith, or from being upon trial, any person member of the Conference, or admitted into connection, or upon trial, for any cause which to the Conference may seem fit or necessary; and every member of the Conference so expelled and put out shall cease to be a member thereof to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. And the Conference, immediately after the expulsion of any member thereof as aforesaid, shall elect another person to be a member of the Conference, in the stead of such member so expelled.

*Ninth*, The Conference shall and may admit into connection with them, or upon trial, any person or persons whom they shall approve, to be preachers and expounders of God's holy word, under the care and direction of the Conference; the name of every such person or persons so admitted into connection or upon trial as aforesaid, with the time and degrees of the admission, being entered in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference.



*Tenth*, No person shall be elected a member of the Conference, who hath not been admitted into connection with the Conference as a preacher and expounder of God's holy word, as aforesaid, for twelve months.

*Eleventh*, The Conference shall not, nor may nominate or appoint any person to the use and enjoyment of, or to preach and expound God's holy word in, any of the chapels and premises so given or conveyed, or which may be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, who is not either a member of the Conference, or admitted into connection with the same, or upon trial, as aforesaid; nor appoint any person for more than three years successively to the use and enjoyment of any chapel and premises already given, or to be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, except ordained ministers of the Church of England.

*Twelfth*, That the Conference shall and may appoint the place of holding the yearly assembly thereof at any other city, town, or place, than London, Bristol, or Leeds, when it shall seem expedient so to do.

*Thirteenth*, And, for the convenience of the chapels and premises already, or which may hereafter be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, situate in Ireland, or other parts out of the kingdom of Great Britain, the Conference shall and may, when, and as often as it shall seem expedient, but not otherwise, appoint and delegate any member or members of the Conference, with all or any of the powers, privileges, and advantages hereinbefore contained or vested in the Conference; and all and every the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments whatsoever of such member or members of the Conference so appointed and delegated as aforesaid, the same being put into writing, and signed by such delegate or delegates, and entered in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference, and subscribed, as after-mentioned, shall be deemed, taken, and be, the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments of the Conference, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever, from the respective times when the same shall be done by such delegate or delegates, notwithstanding any thing herein contained to the contrary.

*Fourteenth*, All resolutions and orders touching elections, admissions, expulsions, consents, dispensations, delegations, or appointments, and acts whatsoever of the Conference, shall be entered and written in the Journals or Minutes of the Conference, which shall be kept for that purpose, publicly read, and then subscribed by the president and secretary thereof for the time being, during the time such Conference shall be assembled; and, when so entered and subscribed, shall be had, taken, received, and be the acts of the Conference; and such entry and subscription, as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, received, and be evidence of all and every such acts of the said Conference, and of their said delegates, without the aid of any other proof; and whatever shall not be so entered and subscribed, as aforesaid, shall not be had, taken, received, or be the act of the Conference: and the said president and secretary are hereby required and obliged to enter and subscribe as aforesaid, every act whatever of the Conference.



*Lastly*, Whenever the said Conference shall be reduced under the number of forty members; and continue so reduced for three yearly assemblies thereof successively, or whenever the members thereof shall decline or neglect to meet together annually for the purposes aforesaid, during the space of three years, that then, and in either of the said events, the Conference of the people called Methodists shall be extinguished, and all the aforesaid powers, privileges, and advantages shall cease; and the said chapels and premises, and all other chapels and premises, which now are, or hereafter may be settled, given, or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, shall vest in the trustees for the time being of the said chapels and premises respectively, and their successors forever; upon trust that they, and the survivors of them, and the trustees for the time being, do, shall, and may, appoint such person and persons to preach and expound God's holy word therein, and to have the use and enjoyment thereof for such time, and in such manner, as to them shall seem proper.

Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to extinguish, lessen, or abridge the life-estate of the said John Wesley, and Charles Wesley, or either of them, of and in any of the said chapels and premises, or any other chapels and premises wherein they the said John Wesley and Charles Wesley, or either of them, now have, or may have, any estate or interest, power or authority whatsoever. In witness whereof, the said John Wesley hath hereunto set his hand and seal, the twenty-eighth day of February, in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, and so forth, and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

JOHN (Seal) WESLEY.

Sealed and delivered (being first )  
duly stamped) in the presence of }

WILLIAM CLULOW, Quality-court, Chancery-lane, London.

RICHARD YOUNG, Clerk to the said William Clulow.

The above is a true copy of the original deed, which is enrolled in Chancery, and was therewith examined by us.

WILLIAM CLULOW,  
RICHARD YOUNG.

The selection of a hundred preachers out of a body of one hundred and ninety-two, for the purpose of a legal Conference, which was to be the ultimate authority among "the people called Methodists," was the most arbitrary act which this grand old autocrat ever performed. Herein he exercised his episcopal authority to the utmost, and never did, and probably never could, give any other reason for the selection than his own good will and pleasure. Some new men



were admitted and some old preachers were rejected, and in several instances of two men of equal rank and standing on the same circuit, one was taken and the other left.

"In nominating these preachers," says Mr. Wesley, in his history and defense of this notable document, "as I had no advisers, so I had no respect of persons; but I simply set down those that, according to my best judgment, were the most proper. This was the rise and this the nature of that famous 'Deed of Declaration,' that vile, wicked deed, concerning which you have heard such an outcry. And now, can any one tell me how to mend it, or how it could have been made better? 'O yes. You might have inserted two hundred as well as one hundred preachers.' No; for then the expenses of meeting would have been double, and all the circuits would have been without preachers. 'But you might have named other preachers instead of these.' True, if I had thought as well of them as they did of themselves. But I did not; therefore I could not do otherwise than I did, without sinning against God and my own conscience.

"You see, then, in all the pains I have taken about this absolutely necessary deed, I have been laboring, not for myself, (I have no interest therein,) but for the whole body of Methodists; in order to fix them upon such a foundation as is likely to stand as long as the sun and moon endure. That is, if they continue to walk by faith, and to show forth their faith by their works; otherwise, I pray God to root out the memorial of them from the earth."

After a storm of criticism, and some few threats of rebellion, the Conference ratified the "Deed of Declaration," and "The Legal Hundred" became an order of nobility among the Methodist preachers; an aristocracy in the true sense, that is to say, a government by the best. Since that day more liberal methods of management have been devised: ministers not members of this body, and laymen, also, having been admitted to a place in Methodist counsels. From first to last it has been notably difficult, if not impossible, for a man without pre-eminent ability and well-tried character and honor to become a member of this honorable body; and, tested by its working and its results for nearly a hundred years, this constitution of British Methodism was every way worthy of the great mind which devised it.

In a letter addressed to Joseph Bradford, who was his traveling



companion during the last years of his life, Mr. Wesley addresses these words to the Conference, which were to be read to them after his death:—

**“MY DEAR BRETHREN:** Some of our traveling preachers have expressed a fear, that, after my decease, you will exclude them, either from preaching in connection with you, or from some other privileges which they now enjoy. I know no other way to prevent any such inconvenience than to leave these my last words with you.

“I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that you never avail yourselves of the Deed of Declaration to assume any superiority over your brethren; but let all things go on among those itinerants who choose to remain together, exactly in the same manner as when I was with you, so far as circumstances will permit.”

He also charges them to “have no respect of persons in stationing the preachers,” in choosing children for the Kingswood School, or in the distribution of Conference funds, but to do all things, as he himself had done, with a single eye to the glory of God and the good of all concerned.

**A Vigorous Old Age.**—On the 26th of June, 1785, Mr. Wesley, now an old man of eighty-two, wrote from Dublin to one of his friends, as follows:—

“Many years ago I was saying: ‘I cannot imagine how Mr. Whitefield can keep his soul alive, as he is not now going through honor and dishonor, evil report and good report; having nothing but honor and good report attending him wherever he goes.’ It is now my own case; I am just in the condition now that he was then in. I am become, I know not how, an honorable man. The scandal of the cross is ceased; and all the kingdom, rich and poor, Papists and Protestants, behave with courtesy, nay, and seeming good will! It seems as if I had well-nigh finished my course, and our Lord was giving me an honorable discharge.”

During this year Wesley lost by death two of the most intimate and valued friends of his whole life-time—Vincent Perronet and John Fletcher; the latter at fifty-six years of age and the former at ninety-two. His brother Charles was now a feeble, broken-down old man; but John Wesley, with a vigor which he believed to be supernatural, an immediate and special gift from God, was ranging through England.



## A VIGOROUS OLD AGE.

Scotland, and Ireland with the spirit of a hardy young sailor, enduring hardships and discomforts with cheerfulness, absolutely unconscious of danger, and almost insensible to fatigue, present incessantly in chapels, court-houses, dance-halls, barns, factories, not unfrequently in the open air.

The following sketch of his personal appearance in his old age was given by John Jackson, Esq., R.A., an eminent London artist:—

"The figure of Mr. Wesley was remarkable. His stature was low, his habit of body in every period of life the reverse of corpulent, and expressive of strict temperance and continual exercise. Notwithstanding his small size, his step was firm, and his appearance, till within a few years of his death, vigorous and muscular. His face for an old man was one of the finest we have seen. A clear, smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, an eye the brightest and most piercing that can be conceived, and a freshness of complexion scarcely ever to be found at his years, and impressive of the most perfect health, conspired to render him a venerable and interesting figure. Few have seen him without being struck with his appearance, and many who have been greatly prejudiced against him have been known to change their opinion the moment they were introduced into his presence. In his countenance and demeanor there was a cheerfulness mingled with gravity; a sprightliness which was the natural result of an unusual flow of spirits, and yet was accompanied with every mark of the most serene tranquillity. His aspect, particularly on profile, had a strong character of acuteness and penetration. In dress he was the pattern of neatness and simplicity. A narrow, plaited stock, a coat with a small, upright collar, no buckles at his knees, no silk or velvet in any part of his apparel, and a head as white as snow, gave an idea of something primitive and apostolic, while an air of neatness and cleanliness was diffused over his whole person."

He was still as much of a student as ever, being now engaged upon a life of his beloved friend Fletcher, to which, he says, "I devote all the time I can spare from five in the morning till eight at night. These are my studying hours. I cannot write longer in a day without hurting my eyes." This was in September, 1786, and this student, who was writing fifteen hours a day on what proved to be his last literary work, was now eighty-three years old.



In December of the same year he writes: "Ever since that good fever which I had in the North Island, I have had, as it were, a new constitution; all my pains and aches have forsaken me and I am a stranger to weariness of any kind. This is the Lord's doing, and it may well be marvelous in our eyes."

**Death of Charles Wesley.**—On the 29th of March, 1788, Charles Wesley departed this life, in the eightieth year of his age. He died at his residence in the city of London, which he had seldom left for many years, except occasionally to attend the Methodist Conferences at Leeds.

As a writer of hymns, the most and the best that ever breathed forth from the soul of any one man, Charles Wesley will be held in immortal honor, though it is painfully evident that in the last years of his life his mind was so disturbed by the increasing liberties taken by the Methodists with the forms and orders of the Established Church, that, personally, he was not so much admired as endured. Bodily infirmities also pressed upon him, and his life-long prejudices kept him in a religious fret over the damage they were receiving at the hands of his more progressive brother, who now treated him with almost fatherly tenderness, overlooking his peevishness, and healing the wounds which would otherwise have resulted therefrom.

In his early life Charles Wesley was a hero; he might have been a saint; and on more than one occasion he had a narrow escape from being a martyr. He could face a mob and hold his ground till his clothes were torn to tatters and the blood ran down his face in streams; and yet he was a man of gentle spirit, tender sensibility, and, as he himself declares, "wanting in what is ordinarily called courage." He was a zealot of the first order; he was also a truly converted soul; but his narrow Churchmanship cast a cloud over the latter portion of his life, which even his genius and piety do not wholly dispel.

**The Tomb of Charles Wesley** is in the church-yard of St. Mary-le-bone, in London, where he was buried at his own request by the priest of the parish in which he lived. He was well aware that his brother intended to be buried among his own people in the little cemetery by the City Road Chapel, but Charles would not lie beside him in death, because the place appointed was unconsecrated ground.



As if the ground where John Wesley were buried needed any other consecration!

This piece of High-churchism on the part of his younger brother gave Mr. Wesley some pain and trouble, and in answer to the gossip occasioned by the matter he published his views on the consecration of churches and burial-grounds; declaring it to be a practice which was "neither enjoined by the law of the English State nor of the English



CHARLES WESLEY'S TOMB.

Church, neither is it enjoined by the law of God; a thing wrong in itself, flavored with Papal superstition, and absolutely ridiculous in the eyes of sensible Protestants." \*

**Wesleyan Hymnology.**—The list of poetical publications which bear the names of John and Charles Wesley is forty-nine in number: books and papers, large and small. "Hymns for the Watch

\* "Methodist Magazine," 1788, p. 543.



Night," is a little tract of twelve duodecimo pages; another of the same size is entitled, "Hymns Occasioned by the Earthquake, March 8, 1750, to which is added a Hymn upon the Pouring out of the Seventh Vial, Rev. xvii, etc., occasioned by the destruction of Lisbon;" while "A Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems, from the most celebrated English Authors," published in 1844, is a work in three volumes, containing over five thousand pages, very much of which is original matter. There are on his list of poetical works: "Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution;" "Hymns for the Expected Invasion of 1759;" "Hymns for the Family;" "Hymns for Children;" "Hymns for the Nativity of Our Lord;" "A Hymn for the English in America;" extracts from Milton's "Paradise Lost," from Young's "Night Thoughts," and other English standard poems; besides the ten or twelve hymn-books proper; chief of which is his "Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists," 1780, a volume of five hundred pages, which has only recently given place among the English Wesleys to a larger and more catholic collection.

Of the forty-nine publications above mentioned, only thirteen bear the name of Charles Wesley at all, and only five of these are credited to him alone; one of the five being a short poem addressed by him to his brother John.

**Charles Wesley as a Poet.**—Beyond all dispute Charles Wesley was the prince of lyric poets. He was a poet by birth, by culture, by inspiration, and by providential opportunity. Samuel Wesley, as has been seen, was much given to writing poetry, or, as he himself expressed it, to "beating rhymes;" his son Charles inherited this rhyming faculty to an eminent degree, and it is said that he produced an immense amount of work in rhyme and meter which was no better than those strained and stupid couplets into which his father "beat" the Holy Scriptures. He was continually producing hymns. If one of his children fell sick he wrote a hymn about it, and another hymn when the child got well again. Every addition to his family stimulated his genius to the production of several hymns; a hymn to the mother, another to the child, another to the remaining members of the family, and perhaps still another to mothers and children in general; "some of which," says Dr. William Rice, to whom the Church is so largely indebted for its admirable new Hymnal, "have



been admitted to a place in our standard hymn book ; though no one not familiar with their history, would imagine the occasion which called them forth."

In his Journal the poet records the fact that at one time he sprained his wrist, in consequence whereof he was not able to write any hymns that day—an entry which shows that his hymn-writing faculty was a perennial fountain from which flowed an almost constant stream. From this stream his superb sacred lyrics in the Methodist Hymnal are taken, sometimes from the middle of a long poem, the remainder of which is utterly devoid of merit ; for which critical selection the world is indebted to his older brother, whose superior culture and more critical judgment enabled him to select the good from the common, and sometimes helped him to improve upon the original.

"From the mass of Charles Wesley's poetry," says the eminent authority just quoted, "two hundred hymns may be selected which cannot be equaled by a like selection from the writings of any other man ;" and Dr. Isaac Watts, the only man who disputes the crown with the poet of the Methodists, is credited with the statement, extravagant as it may seem, that Charles Wesley's hymn entitled "Wrestling Jacob" was worth all the poetry that he himself had ever written.

The best hymns of Methodism, however, are more than Wesleyan ; they are divine. That glorious wave of spiritual power and inspiration, sweeping over the land, caught up this enthusiast, this poet-preacher, into the third heaven of song, and showed him things which it is quite lawful, but also quite impossible, for ordinary men to utter. His verse owed nothing to that heathen myth, the "Muse of



ISAAC WATTS.



poetry;" and every thing to the Holy Spirit, by whom the great truths of the Christian faith were made gloriously real to his soul, and without which revelation he would have been only another rhyme-beater, whose pages could only be valued by the pound. Add to his birthright, and his heavenly inspiration, the unequalled opportunity of making the songs of a people whose language is full of music, and who were, and are, the heartiest singers that Christendom ever produced, and we have the three points which determine the circle of Charles Wesley's poetic power and fame.

There are evidences that John Wesley might have been the greater poet of the two, but he was so much else besides that this one among his many talents is often overlooked. What a glorious nature, then, must his have been, in which there was room enough for a poet larger than Charles Wesley, without in anywise crowding his other capacities, or obscuring the view that history gives us of the rest of that glorious man!

**Wesley and the Antislavery Society.**—In the year 1780 a young gentleman, only twenty-one years of age, of brilliant talents and master of a handsome fortune, made his appearance in the British House of Commons, whose name was destined to take first rank among the benefactors of mankind.

From a boy the soul of William Wilberforce was moved with hatred and horror toward the traffic in human flesh, which in many of the English Colonies was a source of enormous wealth. The slave-trade was carried on in British ships, defended by British arguments, and sustained by British authority, both in Church and State. Even George Whitefield, as we have seen, was the owner of a considerable number of slaves, whom he kept to work his Orphan House plantation in Georgia: and so firmly was this iniquity intrenched, that none but an enthusiast, moved by that sort of enthusiasm which is an inspiration from God, would have ventured to attempt its extirpation.

In 1787 the London Society for the Suppression of the Slave-Trade, was formed. Thirteen years before this, John Wesley had published his "Thoughts upon Slavery," at which time Wilberforce was a youth of fifteen.

It is a pleasant sight to see this veteran of eighty-four and this young champion of twenty-eight uniting their forces for such a glorious



struggle. Wesley was not able to give his personal attention to the affairs of the new society, but from time to time wrote letters which were read at their meetings, giving sagacious counsel and pledging all possible assistance. He also printed a new edition of his "Thoughts upon Slavery," and spread it broadcast throughout England and Ireland. Thus began the struggle which was kept up for forty-six



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

years, and which, on the second of August, 1833, terminated in the Act of Emancipation, whereby Great Britain wiped out that blot upon her national character, at a cost to the national treasury of twenty million pounds sterling, and provided for the liberation of all the slaves within the limits of her realm.

The following remarkable incident is related by Mr. Wesley. It



occurred during his antislavery sermon preached at Bristol on the sixth of March, 1788. The topic of the discourse had been previously announced, and the chapel was densely crowded both with rich and poor.

"About the middle of the discourse," says Wesley, "while there was on every side attention still as night, a vehement noise arose, none could tell why, and shot like lightning through the congregation. The terror and confusion were inexpressible. You might have imagined it was a city taken by storm. The people rushed upon each other with the utmost violence; the benches were broken in pieces; and nine tenths of the congregation appeared to be struck with the same panic. In about six minutes the storm ceased almost as suddenly as it rose; and, all being calm, I went on without the least interruption. It was the strangest incident of the kind I ever remembered; and I believe none can account for it, without supposing some preternatural influence. Satan fought, lest his kingdom should be delivered up. We set the next day apart as a day of fasting and prayer, that God would remember those poor outcasts of men," [the slaves,] "and make a way for them to escape, and break their chains asunder."

To John Wesley "the prince of the power of the air" was a veritable person, against whom he felt it his duty to contend. He believed in the devil and hated him, just as truly as he believed in the Lord and loved him; and it was no strain upon his faith to believe that himself and his work were hated and opposed by the one and loved and assisted by the other.

Wesley died in the beginning of this great antislavery movement, but his name will stand in history with those of Wilberforce and Clarkson, as one of the first and chief promoters of that deliverance to the captives which is the greatest honor and glory ever achieved by the British nation.

**Wesley's Last Visit to Ireland.**—On the first of March, 1789, Mr. Wesley set out on his last journey to Ireland.

The management of Methodism in that island had largely fallen into the hands of Dr. Thomas Coke, who had now become his chief assistant, and who for many years in succession had presided at the sessions of the Irish Conference; but Wesley was still held to be their father in the Gospel, and his visit on this occasion, while Dr. Coke was absent in America on his episcopal mission, was a season of great rejoicing.



**The Irish Conference** was now composed of sixty preachers, of whom, at the session of 1789, there were between forty and fifty present. Wesley, who had a peculiar love for Ireland, sets down in his *Journal* this complimentary notice:—

“Friday, July 3. Our little Conference began in Dublin and ended Tuesday, 7. On this I observe, 1. I never had between forty and fifty such preachers together in Ireland before; all of them, we had reason to hope, alive to God, and earnestly devoted to his service. 2. I never saw such a number of preachers before so unanimous in all points, particularly as to leaving the Church, which none of them had the least thought of. It is no wonder that there has been this year so large an increase of the Society.”

And again he writes: “I have found such a body of members as I hardly believed could have been found together in Ireland—men of so exact experience, so deep piety, and so strong understanding. I am convinced they are in no way inferior to the English Conference except it be in number.”

Ireland is a rainy country. Again and again the heavens poured down their showers upon the out-of-door congregations which gathered to hear the great Wesley; but they listened almost as well with the water running down their backs as if they had been under the shelter of a cathedral dome. Sometimes the preacher managed to find a covered spot, but if none were convenient he too stood up under the outpouring, and preached “until he was wet to the skin, praying with a fervent heart, the while, that grace might descend upon his hearers in equally copious floods.”

From Dublin he made a preaching tour through the Irish provinces, in which tour of about nine weeks he preached in more than sixty different towns and villages, sometimes in churches and chapels, sometimes in the open air, and once in a place which he says was “large but not elegant—a cow-house.” He gives no account of the number of members in the Irish Societies, but the minutes of the Bristol Conference of 1790 supply the following figures:—

Number of Circuits in Ireland .....	29
“ Preachers .....	67
“ Members .....	14,106*

\* SMITH'S “History of Methodism,” vol. i, p. 603.



An interesting item of business at this last Irish Conference was Wesley's appointment of "Adam Clarke and his wife to the charge of the Dublin Circuit," in which some serious difficulties had arisen. In a letter to the future king of commentators, who was then in the Isle of Jersey on account of feeble health, after referring to the troubles of the Dublin Society he says:—

"But who is able to watch over them that they may not be moved from their steadfastness? I know none more proper than Adam Clarke and his wife; and indeed it may seem hard for them to come into a strange land again. Well, you may come to me at Leeds at the latter end of next month, and if you can show me any more proper I will send them in your stead."

On the 12th of July, 1789, Wesley bade a final adieu to Ireland. Multitudes followed him to the ship, and before going on board he gave out a hymn which the people sang as well as they could with their hearts in their throats. After the singing the grand old patriarch dropped upon his knees on the wharf and commended them all to God. Then there were hand-shakings, and blessings, and loving farewells; many weeping, and some falling on the old man's neck and kissing him. Now he steps on deck; the lines are cast off; the vessel catches the breath of heaven with its white wings, and the last the warm-hearted Irish Methodists ever see of their beloved bishop he is standing upon the deck, his white locks shining, his face full of fatherly tenderness, and his hand outstretched toward them in a parting benediction.

**Wesley's Last Circuit.**—Early in the year 1790 Mr. Wesley, in spite of the increasing infirmities of age, set out to make his great northern circuit. This tour was Wesley's annual visitation of the Societies in the northern part of England, and of the few that had maintained a foothold in Scotland. On this last occasion it occupied him five months. Think of a man eighty-seven years old, before the age of railways, traveling a five months' circuit through regions where the roads were often next to impassable, carrying with him "the care of all the Churches," preaching from ten to fifteen times a week, and riding in his carriage forty or fifty miles a day! But the grand old hero fairly reveled in it. He gloried in being able to endure so much hardness as a soldier of Jesus Christ.



He also kept up his field preaching: sometimes, even in wintry weather, and with the cold winds cutting his face and trying to shake his old bones, the voice of the venerable man would rise in all the clearness and fullness of his earlier years, as, with the sky for a sounding-board and the round earth for a pulpit, he preached to the multitudes which crowded about him, to whom his presence was almost like that of a saint come back from glory, and whose words



WESLEY'S TREE.

were all the more precious because it was evident that the man was ripe for heaven, and they would doubtless see his face no more.

In the church-yard of the little town of Winchelsea stands an old ash-tree, which is known in the town and for many miles about by the name of "Wesley's tree," from the circumstance that beneath its shade that venerable man on this great circuit preached the last sermon that he ever delivered in the open air.



It was no unusual thing for him when on these episcopal tours of visitation to take his breakfast at three o'clock in the morning, and to enter his carriage at four. He would say to his coachman, "Have the carriage at the door at four o'clock; I do not mean a quarter or five minutes past, but *four*," and the coachman knew very well that it would not do to be a minute late. During this last pastoral visitation of his Societies Wesley preached eighty sermons in eight weeks, besides frequently celebrating the Lord's Supper, at which he sometimes administered to from fifteen hundred to two thousand communicants.

As a specimen of the cool courage and determination of Wesley in his old age the following account of his ride through the sea over the Cornwall sands between the towns of Hayle and St. Ives is given by his coachman on that occasion.

"I first heard Mr. Wesley preach in the street, near our market-house," says he, "when I was hostler at the London Inn. Mr. Wesley came there one day in a carriage driven by his own servant, who, being unacquainted with the roads further westward, he engaged me to drive him to St. Ives. We set out, and on our arrival at Hayle we found the sands between that and St. Ives, over which we had to pass, overflowed by the rising tide.

"On reaching the water's edge I hesitated to proceed, and advised him of the danger of crossing; and a captain of a vessel, seeing us stopping, came up and endeavored to persuade us from an undertaking so full of peril, but without effect, for Mr. Wesley had resolved to go on; he said he had to preach at St. Ives at a certain hour, and that he must fulfill his appointment. Looking out of the carriage window he called out:—

"'Take the sea! take the sea!'

"I dashed into the waves. The horses were soon swimming, and the carriage nearly overwhelmed with the tide. I struggled hard to maintain my seat in the saddle, while the poor horses were snorting and rearing in the most fearful manner. I expected every moment to be swept into eternity, and the only hope I had was on account of driving so holy a man. At that awful moment I heard Mr. Wesley's voice. With difficulty I turned my head toward the carriage, and saw his white locks dripping with water, which ran down his face.



He was looking calmly upon the waters, undisturbed by his perilous situation. He hailed me in a loud voice, and said :—

“ ‘What is thy name, driver?’ ”

“ I answered, ‘Peter, sir.’ ”

“ He said, ‘Peter, fear not; thou shalt not sink.’ ”

“ That gave me new courage. I again urged on the flagging horses, and, plunging and wallowing through the waves, at last we reached the opposite shore in safety.”

**Visiting the Classes.**—In his Journal of his last grand epis-



A BRAVE RIDE.

copal tour Wesley speaks of “the unpleasing work of visiting the classes,” and mentions the fact that the Dublin Society had increased to about eleven hundred members, of whom, after due examination, he “felt obliged to exclude about one hundred.”

As the chief authority among the “people called Methodists,” Wesley held himself responsible for the correctness of the lives of the members of his Societies. All that was required of any one on being



admitted to this fraternity was "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and obedience to the 'general rules,'" hence it frequently became necessary to correct the rolls and to cut off therefrom the names of those who had fallen away from Methodism; though that did not **always** imply falling from grace, since many persons joined the Societies who did not profess to have any grace, but sought to obtain it in this particular manner.

Wesley's method was to meet the classes, and by personal inquiry find out how the souls of his people prospered; a work which of all others he most heartily disliked; but he would not neglect it, especially because there were increasing signs of aversion to it on the part of some of his preachers. He must needs hold a personal examination of the minds and consciences of twenty-five hundred sinners in all stages of penitence and salvation; some ignorant and needing instruction, some stupid and unable to receive it, some stubborn and determined not to have it, some full of foolish fancies to be despoiled, some full of doubts to be cleared away, some in sorrow to be comforted, others in rebellion to be expelled; with as many shades and variations of these general conditions as there were individuals in the Society—such was the task which the Bishop of the Methodists speaks of as "the unpleasing work of visiting the classes."

**Wesley's Last Conference.**—The forty-seventh Methodist Conference was opened at Bristol on the 27th of July, 1790. The unpleasing work of visiting and sifting the classes was not neglected, and after that process the Bristol Society numbered nine hundred and forty-four. The statistics of the body of Methodists, both at home and abroad, which were reported at this Conference were something amazing. Up to the year 1780 the movement had been a glorious success, but its progress during the last ten years of Wesley's life was more than double the united results of the forty years preceding.

**Statistics—1780 to 1790.**—In the year 1780 there were 64 circuits in the United Kingdom; in 1790 there were 115. Then there were 171 itinerant preachers employed; now there were 294. Then there were 43,380 members of the Society; now there were 71,568. Then there were no missionary stations; now 19 missionaries were appointed to Antigua, Barbadoes, St. Vincent's, St. Christopher's, Nevis, Tortola, Jamaica, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, in which was an



aggregate membership of 5,350 persons—800 in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, and 4,550 in the West Indies. In 1780 there were in America twenty circuits, 42 itinerant preachers, and 8,504 members of Society. In 1790 there were 114 circuits, 228 itinerant preachers, and 57,631 members of Society.

These statistics, put in another form, will stand thus:—\*

	Methodist Circuits throughout the world.	Methodist Itinerant Preachers.	Methodist Members.
1790	240	541	134,549
1780	84	213	52,834
INCREASE in 10 years.	156	328	82,215

**Plain Words to Rich Methodists.**—The members of the first United Societies, however much they may have been exercised with the cares of the world, were not many of them perplexed with the deceitfulness of riches; but in his last days Wesley observed, with indignation as well as alarm, that the gifts of the people for the cause of God did not increase at all in proportion to the increase of their wealth, and his exhortations to the rich Methodists during the last few months of his life are worthy of everlasting remembrance. He preached two notable sermons during this year; one entitled, “Why has Christianity done so Little Good in the World?” text, Jeremiah viii, 22: the other, “The Rich Fool,” from the words, “If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.” Psalm lxii, 10. The following selections will show the faithfulness of his dealing upon this subject:—

“Let us descend to particulars; and see that each of you deals faithfully with his own soul. Do you not *eat* more plentifully or more delicately than you did ten or twenty years ago? Do not you use more *drink*, or drink of a more *costly* kind, than you did then? Do you sleep on as hard a bed as you did once, suppose your health will bear it? Do you *fast* as often now you are rich, as you did when you were poor? Ought you not in all reason to do this rather more often than more seldom? I am afraid your own heart condemns you. You are not clear in this matter.

\* TYRMAN'S “Life of Wesley.”



“Do not some of you seek no small part of happiness in that trifle of trifles, dress? Do not you bestow more money, or, which is the same, more time and pains upon it, than you did once? I doubt this is not done to please God. Then it pleases the devil. If you laid aside your needless ornaments some years since, ruffles, necklaces, spider caps, ugly, unbecoming bonnets, costly linen, expensive laces, have you not, in defiance of religion and reason, taken to them again?

“Permit me to come a little closer still; perhaps I may not trouble you any more on this head. I am pained for you that are *rich in this world*. Do you give all you can? You who receive £500 a year, and spend only £200, do you give £300 back to God? If not, you certainly rob God of that £300.

“‘Nay, may I not do what I will with *my own*?’

“Here lies the ground of your mistake. It is not your *own*. It cannot be, unless you are Lord of heaven and earth.

“‘However, I must provide for my children.’

“Certainly. But how? By making them rich? When you will probably make them heathens, as some of you have done already. Leave them enough to live on, not in idleness and luxury, but by honest industry.”

On the delicate question of marriage with unbelievers, he gives faithful warning thus:—

“How great is the darkness of that execrable wretch (I can give him no better title, be he rich or poor) who will sell his own child to the devil; who will barter her own eternal happiness for any quantity of gold or silver! What a monster would any man be accounted who devoured the flesh of his own offspring! And is he not as great a monster, who, by his own act and deed, gives her to be devoured by that roaring lion, as he certainly does (so far as is in his power) who marries her to an ungodly man.

“‘But he is rich; he has £10,000!’

“What if it were £100,000? The more the worse; the less probability will she have of escaping the damnation of hell. With what face wilt thou look upon her, when she tells thee in the realms below, ‘Thou hast plunged me into this place of torment! Hadst thou given me to a good man, however poor, I might now have been in Abraham’s bosom!’



"Are any of you that are called Methodists seeking to marry your children well, (as the cant phrase is,) that is, to sell them to some purchaser that has much money but little or no religion? Have *you* profited no more by all ye have heard? Man, woman, think what you are about! Dare *you* also sell your child to the devil? You undoubtedly do this (as far as in you lies) when you marry a son or a daughter to a child of the devil, though it be one that wallows in gold or silver. O take warning in time! Beware of the gilded bait! Death and hell are hid beneath. Prefer grace before gold and precious stones; glory in heaven to riches on earth! If you do not, you are worse than the very Canaanites. They only made their children *pass through the fire* to Moloch; you make yours *pass into the fire* that never shall be quenched, and *to stay in it forever.*"

"Of the three rules which are laid down on this head in the sermon on 'The Mammon of Unrighteousness,' you may find many that observe the first rule, namely, *Gain all you can.* You may find a few that observe the second, *Save all you can.* But how many have you found that observe the third rule, *Give all you can?* Have you reason to believe that five hundred of these are to be found among fifty thousand *Methodists?* And yet nothing can be more plain than that all who observe the two first rules, without the third, will be twofold more the children of hell than ever they were before.

"O that God would enable me once more, before I go hence and am no more seen, to lift up my voice like a trumpet to those who *gain* and *save* all they can, but do not *give* all they can! Ye are the men, some of the chief men, who continually grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and in a great measure stop his gracious influence from descending on our assemblies. Many of your brethren, beloved of God, have not food to eat; they have not raiment to put on; they have not a place where to lay their heads. And why are they thus distressed? Because *you* impiously, unjustly, and cruelly detain from them what your Master and theirs lodges in *your* hands on purpose to supply *their* wants. In the name of God, what are you doing? Do you neither fear God, nor regard man? Why do you not deal your bread to the hungry, and cover the naked with a garment? Have you not laid out in your own costly apparel what would have answered both these intentions? This idle expense has no approbation, either from God or your own con-



science. But you say, 'You can *afford* it!' Can any steward *afford* to be an arrant knave? to waste his lord's goods? Can any servant *afford* to lay out his master's money any otherwise than his master appoints him? So far from it, that whoever does this ought to be excluded from a Christian society.

"The Methodists grow more and more self-indulgent because they *grow rich*. Although many of them are still deplorably poor, (*Tell it not in Gath: publish it not in the streets of Askelon!*) yet many others, in the space of twenty, thirty, or forty years, are twenty, thirty, yea, a hundred times richer than they were when they first entered the Society. And it is an observation which admits of few exceptions, that nine in ten of these decreased in grace in the same proportion as they increased in wealth. Indeed, according to the natural tendency of riches, we cannot expect it to be otherwise."

The right to exercise this boldness was earned by a life of self-sacrifice. Wesley was faithful both in little and in much. He could challenge his people to imitate himself, with the mournful assurance that the majority of them would never do it. Dr. Whitehead, one of his biographers, says, that in the course of fifty years it was supposed that Wesley gave away between twenty and thirty thousand pounds; a statement confirmed by Mr. Moore, another biographer, who says: "Mr. Wesley's accounts lie before me. His expenses were kept with great exactness; every penny is recorded, and I presume that the thirty thousand pounds might be increased several thousand more." Wesley's last entry in his account book is as follows:—

"N. B. For upward of sixty years I have kept my accounts exactly, and I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the conviction that I have saved all I can, and *given* all I can, that is, all I have.

"July 16, 1790.

JOHN WESLEY."

How many other life-time accounts would furnish such a trial balance?

During some portions of his life his income from his publishing house was from five hundred to a thousand pounds a year, besides which, large sums of money were placed in his hands for charitable distribution. But none of this did Mr. Wesley consider as his own; he was merely the Lord's steward in this matter, and he received his



yearly allowance of thirty pounds from the hands of the treasurer of his publishing house as if he had been any other itinerant preacher or a teacher in the Kingswood or Newcastle schools, and he declared that, in spite of his great income, he never in all his life had at one time one hundred pounds that he could call his own.

“Poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing all things!”

**Death of John Wesley.**—About ten o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, March 2, 1791, after a brief season of prostration, but without any disease or pain, in the full use of his senses, and in the glorious triumph of the faith he had preached so long and so well, John Wesley passed from the world of the dying to the world of the living.

It was his earnest prayer that he might cease at once to “work and live,” and there were, indeed, only nine days from the date of his last sermon at the house of a friend near London to the time when he departed for the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. On the day after this last discourse (February 24) he wrote his last letter, which, it is interesting to note, was to his young friend Willberforce, cheering him on in his struggle against slavery.

The next day he returned to his residence in City Road, London, and on reaching home he went immediately to his room, and desired to be left alone for a short time. At the end of the time appointed he was found to be ill, and his physician, Dr. Whitehead, was summoned at once.

“They are more afraid than hurt,” said he to the doctor, on his arrival.

But presently he fell into a drowsy condition, in which he passed the next thirty-six hours. On Sunday morning, February 27th, he seemed to be rallying again, got up and sat in his chair, looking cheerful, repeated portions of hymns, and joined in conversation; but soon he began to wander in his mind, and imagined himself to be meeting the classes or preaching. His friends now became alarmed, and, being utterly without hope except from on high, notes were hastily dispatched to the preachers by his faithful friend and traveling companion, Joseph Bradford, in these words:—

“Mr. Wesley is very ill. Pray! Pray! Pray!”



On Tuesday, March 1, after a restless night, being asked if he suffered pain, he answered "No," and then began singing:—

"All glory to God in the sky,  
And peace upon earth be restored!  
O Jesus, exalted on high,  
Appear our omnipotent Lord.  
Who, meanly in Bethlehem born,  
Didst stoop to redeem a lost race,  
Once more to thy people return,  
And reign in thy kingdom of grace."

After some time he said, "I will get up," and, while his friends were arranging his clothes, he began again to sing:—

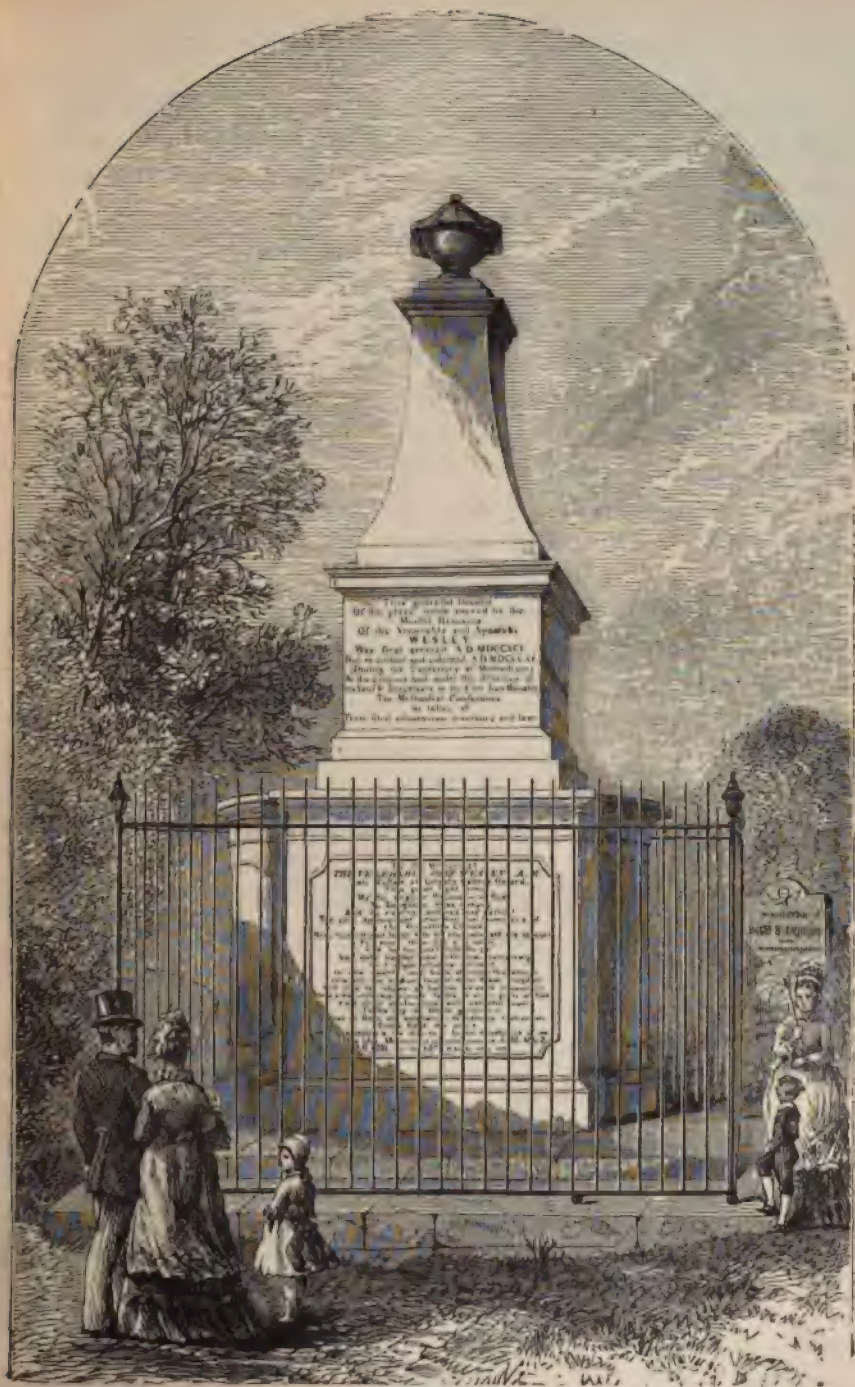
"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,  
And when my voice is lost in death,  
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;  
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,  
While life, and thought, and being last,  
Or immortality endures."

Being exceedingly weak, he was presently carried back to his bed, and after arranging some trifling matters, and giving a few brief directions about his burial, which he desired to be conducted in the simplest manner, he called out "Pray and praise;" and while his friends fell upon their knees he fervently responded to the prayers they offered, especially to that of his friend John Broadbent, who desired that God would still bless the system of doctrine and discipline which Wesley had been the means of establishing.

On rising from prayer his friends drew near to his bed, and with the utmost calmness he saluted each one present, shook hands, and said, "Farewell, farewell!" Some time after this he tried again to speak, but his words were too feeble to be understood. Observing the anxiety on the faces of his friends at being unable to understand him, the dying man summoned all his remaining strength, and exclaimed, in a clear, strong voice, "The best of all is, God is with us." Then, after a short space, lifting his hand, he emphatically repeated, "*The best of all is, God is with us.*"

A little before ten o'clock on the morning of March 2 the supreme





WESLEY'S TOMB, BURIAL GROUND, CITY ROAD CHAPEL.



moment arrived. Several of his relatives and members of his household knelt around his bed in prayer, and on rising from their knees, and seeing that Wesley was about to depart, Bradford solemnly repeated these words:—

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and this heir of glory, shall come in;” and while he was yet speaking, without a sign or a groan, this great man, full of years and honors, passed away, doubtless to hear the words from the lips of his Lord, which, according to human judgment, might be better spoken to him than to almost any other man: “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

The funeral was celebrated at City Road Chapel, on the 9th of March, at five o'clock in the morning. There were two good reasons for the choice of this unusual hour: first, it was Wesley's favorite time for preaching; and second, at a later hour of the day the attendant crowds would have been overwhelming and dangerous.

The beautiful burial service of the Church of England was read by the Rev. Mr. Richardson, who had served him as a faithful son in the ministry for thirty years, and who now lies close by his side.

When the minister came to that part of the service “Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother,” instead of “brother” he used “father,” with an emphasis so suggestive, and a voice so full of love and tenderness, that the whole assembly broke out in uncontrollable sobs and tears.

A simple monument marks his grave in City Road Cemetery, in which it was his desire that his dust might repose among the graves of his people. This burial-ground has now been closed. For a long time it was held as a sacred and honorable spot, in which only the chief men of “the people called Methodists” could hope to find a resting place by the side of their great leader, and after the burial there of that honored father in Israel, the Rev. Jabez Bunting, the number of this elect was declared complete, and the place was once for all given over to memory and to history.

**Wesley's Will.**—A short time before his death Mr. Wesley executed a deed in which he gave his public interests over into the hands of trustees, chief of whom was Dr. Thomas Coke, to be by them managed for the benefit of the Methodist Connection.



His manuscripts he gave to Dr. Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Henry Moore, "to be burned or published as they see good." He also directed the sum of six pounds to be given to six poor men who might carry his body to the grave, particularly desiring that there should be no pomp or show on this occasion, and solemnly adjuring his executors in the name of God to see this desire carried out ; and, finally, he directed that six months after his death eight volumes of sermons from his publishing house should be given to each of his traveling preachers who should then be members of the Methodist Connection.





JOHN WESLEY, M.A.

BORN JUNE 17, 1703; DIED MARCH 2, 1791.

CHARLES WESLEY, M.A.

BORN DECEMBER 18, 1708; DIED MARCH 29, 1788.



"THE BEST OF ALL IS, GOD IS WITH US"



"I LOOK UPON ALL THE WORLD AS MY PARISH"



## CHAPTER XIV.

### IN MEMORIAM.

**Monument to John and Charles Wesley in Westminster Abbey.**—"One hundred and thirty years ago Wesley was shut out of every Church in England; now marble medallion profiles of himself and his brother, accompanied with suitable inscriptions, are deemed deserving of a niche in England's grandest cathedral. The man who a century since was the best abused man in the British isles, is now hardly ever mentioned but with affectionate respect." \*

It is but just and consistent that some memorial of that royal man should be set up among the tombs of England's princes, bishops, heroes, and statesmen. Other men have been kings by the accident of birth of royal blood: John Wesley reigned by virtue of the divine anointing. Other bishops have worn the miter and carried the keys through the devious workings of State-church preferment: John Wesley was a bishop by the grace of God. Other heroes have earned their honors by ravaging sea and land to kill, burn, and destroy: Wesley, with equal courage and equal skill, achieved his fame not by killing but by saving men.

Statesmanship, too, is honored in this memorial in Westminster. Macaulay, in his estimate of John Wesley, says, "His genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu;" and Southey, in a letter to Wilberforce, writes, "I consider Wesley as the most influential mind of the last century—the man who will have produced the greatest effects centuries, or perhaps millenniums, hence, if the present race of men should continue so long."

And if poets are honored in this splendid mausoleum, who more deserves a place therein than Charles Wesley? His songs have helped more souls to happiness and holiness and heaven than those of any other bard since the days of the Psalmist of Israel; like those sacred chants which echo through the ages, the hymns of Wesley with

\* TYRMAN'S "Life and Times of John Wesley."



each succeeding generation are borne on a higher, grander, sweeter tide of harmony; giving still the best expression to the prayers or joys of human souls in every time of trial or triumph, from the sorrow of the broken-hearted penitent at the "mourner's bench" to the notes of victory with which the dying saint catches his first glimpse of the glory that awaits the people of the Lord.

**Dean Stanley on John Wesley.**—On the evening of



REV. ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY, D.D., LL.D.

November 1, 1878, the Methodists of the city of New York gave a reception to Dean Stanley, then on his first visit to this country; which was understood to be a public and official recognition, by the Methodists of America, of the Christian and Catholic courtesy of the distinguished guest of the occasion, who, as custodian of Westminster Abbey,

had given permission to erect therein a monument to the two Wesleys. On that memorable occasion, in responding to the address of welcome, Dean Stanley gave this account of the inception of the plan, which was first proposed to him by the Rev. Drs. Jobson and Rigg, of the British Wesleyan Conference:—

"It was some eight or ten years ago that the then President of the Wesleyan Conference \* asked, with that courtesy and modesty which is characteristic of him, that I would allow 'the erection of a monument in Westminster Abbey, in Poet's Corner, to Charles Wesley, as the sweet psalmist of our English Israel.'

"I ventured to answer, 'If we are to have a monument to Charles why not to John?' To John Wesley, accordingly, together with his

\* Rev. Frederick Jobson, D.D.



brother Charles—not as excluding Charles, but as the greater genius, as the greater spirit of the two—that monument has been erected. John Wesley's monument, with the likeness also of his brother Charles, has been erected in Westminster Abbey, close to a monument which was erected in the last century—and I mention it only as showing that in welcoming this recognition of your illustrious founder I have been but following the precedents already established in Westminster Abbey and in the Church of England—the monument to John Wesley was erected side by side with the monument which in the last century was erected to the memory of the great Congregational divine and poet, Isaac Watts. It has been said in the address, and I think it has been said also by the other speakers, that we are assembled here in a building consecrated to the Methodist worship—consecrated to the worship of Almighty God, as set on foot in this country by John Wesley. It reminds me of what happened to myself when, on visiting in London the City Road Chapel, in which John Wesley ministered, and in the cemetery adjoining, in which he is buried, I asked an old man who showed me the cemetery—I asked him perhaps inadvertently, and as an English Churchman might naturally ask—

“By whom was this cemetery consecrated?”

“And he answered, ‘It was consecrated by the bones of that holy man, that holy servant of God, John Wesley.’”

“In the spirit of that remark I return to the point to which I have ventured to address my remarks, and that is, The claims which the character and career of John Wesley have, not only upon your veneration, but upon the veneration of English Christendom.

“And, first of all, may I venture to say that in claiming him as your founder you enjoy a peculiar privilege among the various communions which have from time to time broken off, or at least varied, from the communion of the Church of England. The founder of the English Baptists is comparatively unknown; the founder of the English Congregationalists (and I say it with no shadow of disrespect) is also comparatively unknown; the founder of English Unitarianism (and I say it also without a shadow of disrespect) is also comparatively obscure; the founder of the Society of Friends, George Fox, has been superseded in celebrity by William Penn, and by other illustrious Friends who have risen in that Society since his departure; but it is no disre-



spect to the great Society of Methodists, it is no disrespect to the eminent and revered persons who sit around me, to say, that no one has risen in the Methodist Society equal to their founder, John Wesley. It is this which makes his character and which makes his fortunes so profoundly interesting to the whole Christian world.

"Again, there is this very interesting peculiarity of John Wesley—interesting not only to Wesleyans, but to the members of every communion throughout the world—he showed how it was possible to make a very wide divergence from the Communion to which he belonged without parting from it. 'I will vary,' he used to say, 'from the Church of England, but I will never leave it.' And this assurance of his determination to continue in the Church of England, in spite of all difficulties and all obstacles, he persevered in to the end. I will not now—it would be most unfitting and unbecoming in me—cast any censure on the course which this great Society, especially in America, has taken since his death. Circumstances change. Opportunities are altered. Things which might have been possible in his life-time may have become impossible since; but, nevertheless, the relations which he himself maintained toward the Church of England are encouragements to every one, in whatever Communion, to endeavor to make the best of that Communion so long as they can possibly remain within it.

"And of these relations, which he encouraged his followers to maintain, of friendliness and communion with the Church of England, I need not repeat his oft-reiterated phrase. These expressions, these entreaties which he urged upon his followers not to part from the mother Church, are not the less interesting nor the less applicable because, as I have said, circumstances both in England and in America have in some degree parted us asunder. There are those in our own country—there are possibly those in America—who think that the Wesleyans, the Methodists, may possibly be one of the links of union between the mother Church of England and those who are more or less estranged from it. On this I pronounce no opinion. I know that separations once made are very difficult to be reconciled. Like the two friends described by the English poet:—

" 'They stand aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs that have been rent asunder,'



"But still we may always trust that something of the old feeling will remain. One cannot help feeling that this very occasion shows that there is something in the hearts of Methodists which responds to the feeling which the mother Church still entertains toward them.

"I always feel that some injustice has been done, in common parlance, both in our Church and in the outlying Communion; that some injustice has been done to the bishops and the authorities of our Church at the time of John Wesley's career. It was not, as has been often said, from the action of the English bishops that John Wesley or his followers were thrown into a state of estrangement. Nothing could have been more friendly, more kindly, and more generous, on the whole, than the conduct of such prelates as Archbishop Potter, as Bishop Lowth, as Bishop Benson; and nothing could have been more friendly than the conduct of our King, George II., or of the judges of England, toward John Wesley and his followers.

"The cause of their estrangement, the cause of the difficulties they encountered, arose very much more from that stupid, vulgar, illiterate prejudice which exists among the professional fanaticism and exclusiveness—that barbarous ignorance—which is found in the mobs of all countries. The feeling which drove the followers of John Wesley from their place in the Church of England was the same which, a few years later, drove the philosopher Priestley from his habitation in Birmingham to take refuge in Pennsylvania; and, therefore, I repeat, the feeling between the Church of England and the Methodists need never be broken. You may remain apart from us, and we may remain apart from you; but we shall always feel that there is an under-current of sympathy on which we can always rely, and possibly, in times far distant, may perhaps once more bring us together."

Bishop Simpson, in his admirable response to the address of Dean Stanley, reasserted the claim of the Methodist Episcopal Church as the true, historic form of Wesleyanism. In the course of his remarks the Bishop said:—

"And now we congratulate you on your visit to this land, and we trust that this visit will be productive not only of happiness to yourself, but, on your return, of increasing the friendship and union between the Churches of England and America. As Methodists, as has been already said, we have taken special interest in this welcome



because of your connection with the honor paid to the memory of John and Charles Wesley. From your lips we have heard how their monument was designed and erected, and we have listened to your estimate of the character of our illustrious founder. The great outlines of this movement, which we in part represent here this evening, were marked out by him. Near the close of his long life he advised the formation of a Church according to the order which we now have; and there is no other organization or communion on earth which



LIVINGSTONE.

so clearly and distinctly represents the mind of John Wesley as the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He planned its order, and we simply followed his advice."

**Livingstone and Wesley.**—"I was wandering through Westminster Abbey one day," continued the Bishop, "and I came to the slab that bears the name of Livingstone, with this inscription, 'And



other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring.' I admired the beauty of the selection, and I said, 'That may refer not only to the wandering sheep in Africa, but it may also refer to the fact that Livingstone did not belong to the national Church, and yet he was an honored Christian as well as an honored explorer.' Then I said to myself, 'Is it not a law of the human frame, that the more freely the blood passes out to the extremity the firmer, the stronger, and the more warmly does the heart beat?' And then I asked myself, 'Was it not through Africa that Livingstone reached Westminster Abbey? was it not because the blood of the Christian heart had flown to the extremity, and come back to make England's heart to grow warmer?' Then I said again, 'Was it not because John Wesley said, "The world is my parish?" that made it possible for you to open the doors of that grand old abbey and admit John Wesley's monument there!' His dust rests with you in England, his spirit walks our land!"

Well did Dean Stanley say, "No one has risen in the Methodist Society equal to their founder, John Wesley." With equal truth he might have said, No one has risen in the Church of England, either before or since his day, equal to John Wesley, the restorer of apostolic order, the defender of apostolic doctrine, and the pattern of apostolic life.

**John Wesley as a Preacher.**—On a certain occasion when Wesley was to preach to a wealthy and elegant congregation, he chose for his text, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

After the sermon one of his offended hearers said to him:—

"Sir, such a sermon would have been suitable in Billingsgate, but it was highly improper here."

"If I had been in Billingsgate," answered Wesley, "my text would have been, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'"

Perhaps there is no single incident in the life of this preacher of righteousness which more fully opens up the secret of his wonderful power. In the first place, his eye was keen enough to pierce through all the outward show of wealth, fashion, rank, and pride, and take a searching look into the souls of his congregation, who were none the less a company of miserable sinners than an equal number of ignorant,



vicious fishwomen, costermongers and old-clothes venders down in the courts of Drury Lane. He was absolutely insensible to those restraints and embarrassments which are wont to oppress the heart and control the manners of those ministers of the Gospel who never can forget themselves, whatever they are saying or doing: he was an ambassador of Christ, and cared only to please his Master by faithfully delivering his message.

He was no respecter of persons. When it came to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" he told his hearers the truth, and left the result with God. What the congregation might think of the preacher was something which did not trouble him. He was setting forth eternal truths with a view to produce eternal results; and he surmounted or brushed away the obstacles and trifles which came in his way with a sublime indifference which made him the master of all situations. As a preacher this one single sentence will describe him, namely—He was God's minister, and as such God honored him.

"The reason why God does not give you power," said Mr. Moody, at one of his great conventions of Christian workers, "is, that he cannot trust you with it."

Wesley was a man who could be trusted with power. He who with an income of a thousand pounds a year could limit himself to thirty pounds and give the rest to the poor, and to help on the work of God, could safely be trusted with money; he who with the most varied scholarship of any clergyman of his time could habitually choose the simplest and plainest forms of speech, and never, even in the presence of dukes or doctors, make use of the Gospel to exhibit his learning—such a man could be trusted with the gift of tongues; he who held his strength as of no other use than to be spent in the Lord's service, could be trusted with length of days; and he who asked no earthly honor for himself was just the man whom Jesus Christ could make a bishop of his Church, and endow with a double portion of authority and grace.

From this it must not be inferred that Wesley was rude in speech or indifferent to the graces of refined society. "Be courteous," says the Scripture, and this precept he obeyed both from the instincts of a gentleman and the piety of a Christian. His pulpit manners were graceful and easy, his voice clear and full of calm authority. His style



was often argumentative, but it was the style of expostulation rather than of debate. He did not stoop to the tricks of declamation or the arts of mere rhetoric; he did nothing "for effect," in the surface sense of that word, and for that very reason he was the most effective preacher in Great Britain. He was scholarly without being pedantic; careful and exact in his statements; and, though wanting the fire and fancy of Whitefield, he was vastly his superior as a preacher when judged by the depth and permanence of the impressions he produced.

It has been said that Wesley "had a genius for godliness." If by that general phrase is meant a divine endowment for seeing and doing every thing in the light of its relations to God and eternity, nothing can more aptly describe the man. This is the key to all his wonderful successes: it was his "godliness" that made him at all points the superior of all other men of his time.

**Wesley as a Scholar.**—It was his constant care not only that his people should be more pious but "more knowing." With this end in view, and without a thought of making money by making books, he wrote and published a series of volumes and tracts covering the whole field of useful learning.

The chief department of knowledge he understood to be the knowledge of God, though in this view of the case he was somewhat singular among the clergy of his day. At Oxford he was a master in Greek, and so familiar was he with the Greek Testament that when his memory failed to recall the exact form of a text in English he could readily quote it in the Greek original.

In 1741 he published an abridgment of a work entitled "Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life, with reference to Learning Knowledge," written by Dr. John Norris, who was an old friend of his father, and whose opinion Wesley thus indorsed and presented to his people. The following extract gives the flavor of the book:—

"I cannot with any patience reflect that, out of so short a time as human life, consisting, it may be, of fifty or sixty years, nineteen or twenty shall be spent in hammering out a little Latin and Greek, and in learning a company of poetical fictions and fantastic stories. If one were to judge of the life of man by the proportion of it spent at school, one would think the antediluvian mark were not yet out. Besides, the



things taught in seminaries are often frivolous. How many excellent and useful things might be learned while boys are thumbing and murdering Hesiod and Homer? Of what signification is such stuff as this to the accomplishment of a reasonable soul? What improvement can it be to my understanding to know the amours of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*, or of *Hero* and *Leander*? Let any man but consider human nature, and tell me whether he thinks a boy is fit to be trusted with Ovid? And yet to books such as these our youth is dedicated, and in these some of us employ our riper years; and when we die this makes one part of our funeral eulogy; though, according to the principles before laid down, we should have been as pertinently and more innocently employed all the while if we had been picking straws in Bedlam.

"The measure of prosecuting learning is its usefulness to good life; and, consequently, all prosecution of it beyond or beside this end is impertinent and immoderate. For my own part, I am so thoroughly convinced of the certainty of the principles here propounded, that I look upon myself as under almost a necessity of conducting my studies by them, and intend to study nothing at all but what serves to the advancement of piety and good life. I have spent about thirteen years in the most celebrated university in the world, in pursuing both such learning as the academical standard requires and as my private genius inclined me to; but I intend to spend my uncertain remainder of time in studying only what makes for the moral improvement of my mind and the regulation of my life."

The above reiterates Wesley's oft-repeated views, not against classical education, but against that ridiculous definition of "The Classics" whereby they are practically limited, as far as the teachings of the higher schools is concerned, to the works of a class of authors which in point of antiquity are modern when compared with the Hebrew classics, and in point of moral and heroic quality are inexpressibly inferior to the Christian myths and fables which they have displaced.

The above extract furnishes, says Mr. Tyerman, "a key to the whole of Wesley's literary pursuits from this, the commencement of his Methodist career, to the end of his protracted life."

"It has been loudly affirmed," says Wesley, "that most of the errors in connection with *me*, who believe it their duty to c



sinners to repentance, having been taken immediately from low trades, tailors, shoemakers, and the like, are a set of poor stupid, illiterate men, that scarce know their right hand from their left; yet I cannot but say that I would sooner cut off my right hand than suffer one of them to speak a word in any of our chapels if I had not reasonable proof that he had more knowledge in the holy Scriptures, more knowledge of himself, more knowledge of God and of the things of God, than nine in ten of the clergymen I have conversed with, either at all the universities, or elsewhere."

More than forty years afterward, in a letter to Bishop Lowth, Wesley says:—

"Some time since I recommended to your lordship 'a plain man, whom I had known above twenty years as a person of deep, genuine piety, and of unblamable conversation.' But he neither understood Greek nor Latin; and he affirmed, in so many words, that he 'believed it was his duty to preach, whether he was ordained or no.' . . . I do not know that Mr. Hoskins had any favor to ask of the Society. He asked the favor of your lordship to ordain him, that he might minister to a little flock in America. But your lordship did not see good to ordain *him*; but your lordship did see good to ordain and send to America other persons, who know something of Greek and Latin, but know no more of saving souls than of catching whales.

"My lord, I do by no means despise learning: I know the value of it too well. But what is this, particularly in a Christian minister, compared to piety? What is it in a man that has no religion? 'As a jewel in a swine's snout.'"

In Hebrew and Latin Wesley was learned, as also in French, Italian, German, and Spanish, which last three languages he studied during his mission to Georgia. His aptitude in linguistic studies appears from the fact that, having found a half dozen Spanish Jews among his Savannah parishioners he mastered their language in a few weeks in order to converse with them concerning the things of the kingdom of God; while among his voluminous works were grammars of the English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French languages, for the use of his Kingswood School. A number of translations from the French are among his published works, and of his translations of hymns from the German, of which there are about forty in the Methodist collec-



tion, Bishop Odenheimer in his collection of "Songs of the Spirit" pronounces this most complimentary judgment:—

"John Wesley, 1739-40, rendered or paraphrased some forty German hymns, and often grandly. His work, indeed, is a unique phenomenon which no successors have equaled or are likely to equal."

The list of Wesley's works includes, besides his original writings, no less than one hundred and eighteen revisions and abridgments from various authors, including theology, history, biography, poetry, politics, natural philosophy, and medicine. He was an omnivorous reader, and turned his reading to good account by reproducing its best results and discoveries in cheap abridgments for the use of his people. His Christian Library, in fifty volumes, 12mo., was a collection of "the choicest pieces of practical divinity which have been published in the English tongue," involving an immense amount of research. He also edited and published voluminous works on History, Natural Science, and Poetry.

In 1753 he published his "Complete English Dictionary, Explaining most of the Hard Words which are Found in the best English Writers: By a Lover of Good English and Common Sense," to which lengthy title he adds these words:—

"N. B.—The author assures you he thinks this is the best English Dictionary in the world."

His treatise on "Electricity," his book of "Directions for Married Persons," and his work on "Primitive Physic," on the one hand, and his Devotional Manuals, Essays on Christian Perfection, Ecclesiastical History, and Original Sin, on the other, lead to the double wonder how such a traveler and preacher could find time to read, write, and publish so great a number and variety of books, as well as how such a student and editor could find time to preach and travel at all. This is, however, accounted for by his constant habit of reading on horseback or in his carriage; his long journeys giving him time for the literary work which would have been enough to make him famous if he had been nothing else than a literary man.

**Wesley's Method in Theology.**—The man who sets out to establish a system of theology is exposed to the same sort of temptations as were some of the early geographers in their first attempts to construct a terrestrial globe.



There were a good many features of the earth's surface whose shape and place they knew quite well; these they set down first. Next they turned their attention to a confused mass of world-making materials of whose position, size, and structure they were only partially informed, which they proceeded to locate and describe approximately, while waiting for further measurements and discoveries.

Having now utterly exhausted their small stock of geographical knowledge, they must have been amazed, perhaps alarmed, to see how large a portion of the surface of their globe was still an absolute blank. But it would not look well to leave it so; such a confession of ignorance would discredit their entire production; therefore they fell to work creating a globe, that is, making one out of nothing. From their plentiful lack of knowledge they threw up a mountain here, scooped out a lake there, traced a river yonder; they sprinkled vast territories with sand and called them deserts, they dotted the seas with islands, drew with unsteady hand the shore line of a possible ocean on the north, and a possible continent on the south; and, having filled up the space as far as possible with names of objects known and unknown, they produced a very pretty world indeed; having, however, this one defect, namely, it was not very much like God's world.

Much in this way wrought Augustine, Calvin, and the rest of the great doctors of inferential theology; which serves to account for the wide difference, at many points, between their teachings and those of the word of God. But so did not John Wesley. He felt no responsibility for the plan of salvation other than to preach it with all his might. The divine "decrees" were none of his business; the "secret will of God" did not challenge his curiosity; it was no part of his mission to construct a full-orbed system of religious logic, but only to explore and illustrate God's world of revelation: therefore he taught what was plain, searched out what was only hidden to be searched for, and when he came to the end of the Scripture teaching, instead of traveling blindly on by means of inferences and analogies, he stopped at the shore of the infinite, and wrote upon its sands that honest word—Unknown.

Wesley's method in theology was the biblical method, as opposed to the systematic method. In his day the holy Scriptures were "a dark continent," even to most of the clergy, which Wesley



felt it his first great duty to explore. In the preface to a volume of his sermons, he says:—

“I want to know one thing, the way to heaven. God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came from heaven.

“He hath written it down in a book!

“O give me that book!

“At any price, give me the book of God!

“I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one book.”

Here was a man—may his tribe increase!—who had the courage of faith. He professed to believe that what the Bible says God says; therefore, he accepted it as it stands, as well as all the consequences it carries, without trying to warp it into conformity with any human opinion. Well was it said of John Wesley, “He had a genius for godliness.” With equal truth it may be said, he had a genius for faith.

However well developed that side of a man may be whose outlook is toward the natural world, he cannot be a great religious leader unless the God-ward side of him be full-grown. No amount of knowledge will supply a deficiency in faith. Our Lord said not, If ye have great knowledge, or judgment, or skill, ye shall remove mountains; but, “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you.” Because of the almost matchless abilities of John Wesley as a scholar, administrator, etc., some of his biographers have been misled into a search among these human powers for the solution of his life-problem; but the true answer to the question, How came Wesley to be the man he was? is found in the immediate relations he held with the Infinite. Without his mighty faith, which certain impotent yet boastful men have called superstition and credulity, he would have been no more of a man than they.

By means of his absolute faith in God he allied himself to God, and thus became a co-worker with God. He saw that the results which the Gospel was intended to reach were supernatural; hence, with a logic as simple as it was sublime, he reached the conclusion that supernatural power must accompany the preaching of the Gospel. On looking into the word of God he saw this power at work in the

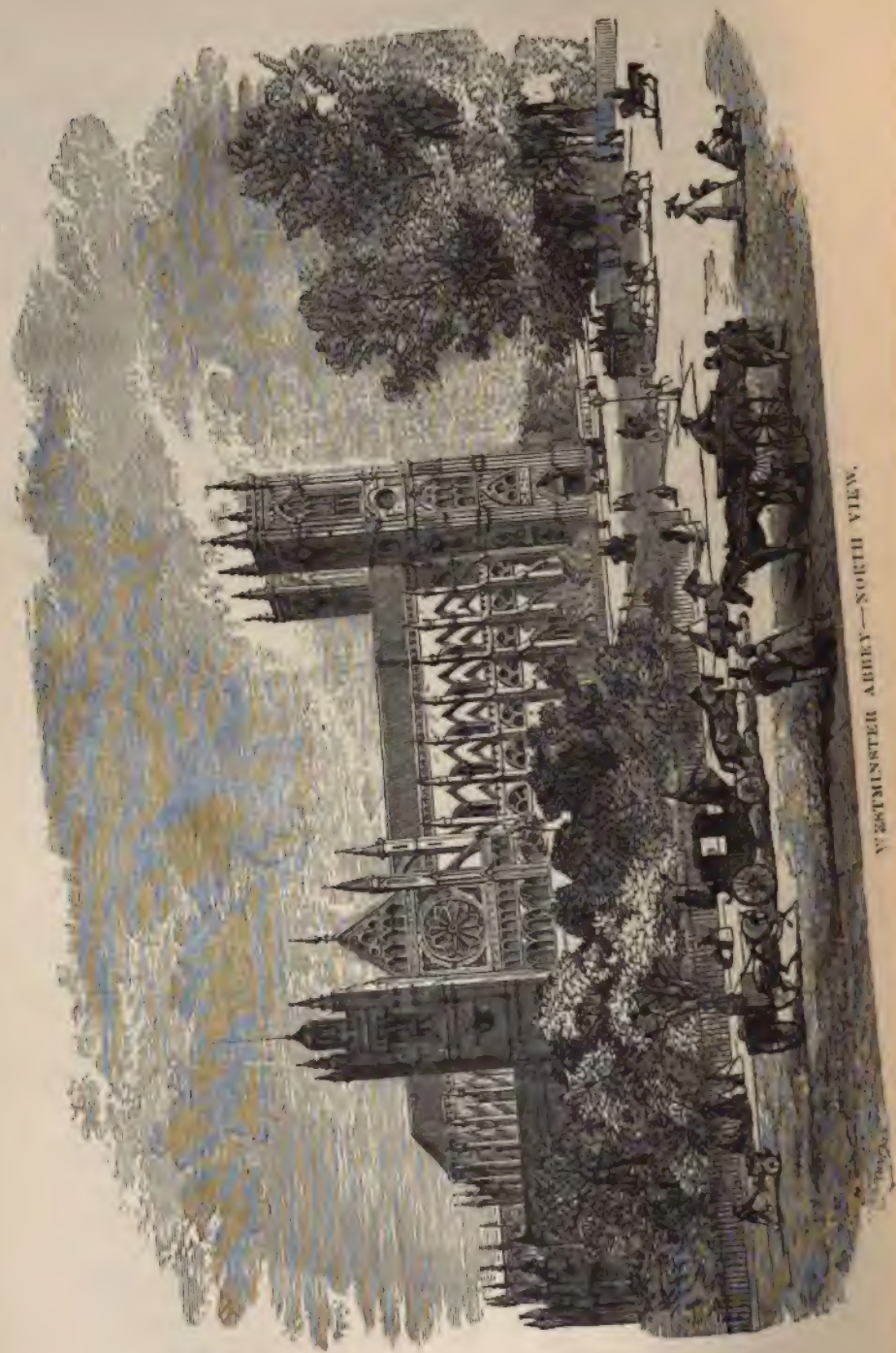


ministry of the apostles. The Scripture called this power the Holy Ghost, and promised his influence to accompany the Gospel. He was a preacher of the Gospel; why, then, should not this divine power accompany his word? For this his whole soul went out in prayer. At length his faith caught hold of the promise; he felt himself in alliance with Heaven; power began to accompany his preaching, and the mountains began to move. Amen! So let it be with us all.

Wesley had two chief enemies to contend with—Calvinism and State-Churchism. The one he battled with the sword of the Spirit; but the other, by reason of his strong prejudices and his wrong education, for a long time baffled and checked him. At length he came to understand that people are not for governments, but that governments are for the people—a principle which holds good in God's government as well as in any other—and from that time he was master of the situation.

The State-Church, like all other hereditary governments, labored under the delusion that the people were its property, to be taxed and tithed for its maintenance and to be governed by its will and pleasure; Wesley, on the other hand, claimed that the Church is a constitutional monarchy, established for the benefit of the people, having the holy Scriptures for its *Magna Charta* and Jesus Christ for its King: whatever, therefore, in the Church of England was opposed to this fundamental idea he came at length to regard as having no binding force, and in the last of his career he did not hesitate to appeal from Canterbury to Jerusalem, from the Prayer Book to the Bible, and from the Bishop to Christ.





WESTMINSTER ABBEY—NORTH VIEW.



## PRESIDENTS OF THE BRITISH WESLEYAN CONFERENCE.

THE PRESIDENTS OF THE CONFERENCE FROM 1791.

Date of Conference.	Where Held.	President.	From what Circuit.	Other Presidents.	Entered Ministry.	Died.
1791	Manchester.....	Thompson, W.....	Wakefield.....	.....	1757	1799
1792	London.....	Mather, Alexander.....	Hull.....	.....	1757	1800
1793	Leeds.....	Pawson, J.....	Liverpool.....	1801	1762	1806
1794	Bristol.....	Hanby, Thomas.....	Leeds.....	.....	1754	1797
1795	Manchester.....	Bradford, J.....	Bristol.....	1803	1770	1808
1796	London.....	Taylor, T.....	Oldham.....	1809	1761	1816
1797	Leeds.....	Coke, T., LL.D.....	.....	1805	1776	1814
1798	Bristol.....	Benson, Joseph.....	Hull.....	1810	1771	1821
1799	Manchester.....	Bradburn, S.....	Manchester.....	.....	1774	1816
1800	London.....	Wood, James.....	London.....	1808	1773	1840
1801	Leeds.....	Pawson, John.....	Birstal.....	1793	.....	.....
1802	Bristol.....	Taylor, Joseph, (1st)...	Burslem.....	.....	1777	1830
1803	Manchester.....	Bradford, Joseph.....	Plymouth-Dock.....	1795	.....	.....
1804	London.....	Moore, H.....	Birmingham.....	1823	1779	1844
1805	Sheffield.....	Coke, Thomas, LL.D....	.....	1797	.....	.....
1806	Leeds.....	Clarke, A., M.A.....	London.....	{ 1814 1822 }	1782	1832
1807	Liverpool.....	Barber, J.....	Sheffield.....	1815	1781	1816
1808	Bristol.....	Wood, James.....	Bristol.....	1800	.....	.....
1809	Manchester.....	Taylor, Thomas.....	Wakefield.....	1796	.....	.....
1810	London.....	Benson, Joseph.....	London.....	1798	.....	.....
1811	Sheffield.....	Atmore, Charles.....	Hull.....	.....	1781	1826
1812	Leeds.....	Entwisle, Joseph.....	Bristol.....	1825	1787	1841
1813	Liverpool.....	Griffith, Wal.....	Rochester.....	.....	1784	1825
1814	Bristol.....	Clarke, Adam, LL.D....	London, East... { 1806 1822 }	.....	.....	.....
1815	Manchester.....	Barber, John.....	Bristol.....	1807	.....	.....
1816	London.....	Reece, R.....	Manchester.....	1835	1787	1850
1817	Sheffield.....	Gaulter, John.....	Rochester.....	.....	1785	1839
1818	Leeds.....	Edmondson, Jon., A.M.	Birmingham.....	.....	1786	1842
1819	Bristol.....	Crowther, Jon.....	Burslem.....	.....	1784	1824
1820	Liverpool.....	Bunting, Jabez, A.M...	London, East... { 1828 1836 1844 }	1799	1858	.....
1821	Manchester.....	Marsden, George.....	Leeds.....	1831	1793	1858
1822	London.....	Clarke, A., LL.D., F.S.A.	Salford..... { 1806 1814 }	.....	.....	.....
1823	Sheffield.....	Moore, Henry.....	London, N. E.. { 1832 1840 1848 }	1799	1854	.....
1824	Leeds.....	Newton, Robert.....	Salford.....	.....	.....	.....
1825	Bristol.....	Entwisle, Joseph.....	Birmingham...	1812	.....	.....
1826	Liverpool.....	Watson, Richard.....	London, North.	.....	1796	1833
1827	Manchester.....	Stephens, J.....	London, North.	.....	1792	1841
1828	London.....	Bunting, Jabez.....	2d Manchester.. { 1820 1836 1844 }	.....	.....	.....
1829	Sheffield.....	Townley, J., D.D.....	London.....	.....	1796	1833
1830	Leeds.....	Morley, G.....	Deptford.....	.....	1792	1843
1831	Bristol.....	Marsden, George.....	2d London.....	1821	.....	.....
1832	Liverpool.....	Newton, R.....	3d Manchester.. { 1824 1840 1848 }	.....	.....	.....



THE PRESIDENTS OF THE CONFERENCE FROM 1791—*Continued.*

Date of Conference.	Where Held.	President.	From what Circuit.	Other Presidencies.	Entered Ministry.	Died.
1833	Manchester....	Treffry, Richard.....	Bristol, South..	....	1792	1842
1834	London.....	Taylor, J., (2d).....	1st London.....	....	1803	1845
1835	Sheffield.....	Reece, Richard.....	3d London.....	1816	....	....
1836	Birmingham....	Bunting, Jabez, D.D....	London.....	{ 1820 1828 1844 }	....	....
1837	Leeds.....	Grindrod, E.....	1st London.....	....	1806	1842
1838	Bristol.....	Jackson, T.....	London.....	1849	1804	1873
1839	Liverpool.....	Lessey, T.....	6th London.....	....	1808	1841
1840	Newcastle-Tyne	Newton, Robert.....	2d Leeds.....	{ 1824 1832 1848 }	....	....
1841	Manchester....	Dixon, James, D.D....	3d Manchester..	....	1812	1871
1842	London.....	Hannah, J., D.D.....	Didsbury.....	1851	1814	1867
1843	Sheffield.....	Scott, J.....	1st London.....	1852	1811	1868
1844	Birmingham...	Bunting, Jabez, D.D....	London.....	{ 1820 1828 1836 }	....	....
1845	Leeds.....	Stanley, Jacob.....	4th London.....	....	1797	1850
1846	Bristol.....	Atherton, W.....	6th London.....	....	1797	1850
1847	Liverpool.....	Jackson, S.....	8th London...	....	1806	1861
1848	Hull.....	Newton, R., D.D.....	Stockport, N....	{ 1824 1832 1840 }	....	....
1849	Manchester....	Jackson, Thomas.....	Richmond.....	1838	....	....
1850	London.....	Beecham, J., D.D....	London.....	....	1815	1856
1851	Newcastle-Tyne	Hannah, John, D.D....	Didsbury.....	1842	....	....
1852	Sheffield.....	Scott, John.....	London.....	1843	....	....
1853	Bradford.....	Lomas, John.....	5th Manchester.	....	1820	1877
1854	Birmingham...	Farrar, John.....	Richmond.....	1870	1822	....
1855	Leeds.....	Keeling, Isaac.....	8th London.....	....	1811	1869
1856	Bristol.....	Young, Robert.....	1st London.....	....	1820	1865
1857	Liverpool.....	West, F. A.....	9th London.....	....	1822	1869
1858	Hull.....	Bowers, John.....	Didsbury.....	....	1813	1866
1859	Manchester....	Waddy, Samuel D., D.D.	Sheffield.....	....	1825	1876
1860	London.....	Stamp, Wm. Wood, D.D.	London.....	....	1823	1877
1861	Newcastle-Tyne	Rattenbury, John.....	London.....	....	1828	....
1862	Camborne.....	Prest, Charles.....	London.....	....	1829	1875
1863	Sheffield.....	Osborn, G., D.D.....	London.....	....	1829	....
1864	Bradford.....	Thornton, Wm. L., M.A.	London.....	....	1830	1865
1865	Birmingham...	Shaw, William.....	London.....	....	1820	1872
1866	Leeds.....	Arthur, William, M.A..	London.....	....	1838	....
1867	Bristol.....	Bedford, John.....	Manchester.....	....	1831	....
1868	Liverpool.....	Hall, Samuel R.....	Manchester.....	....	1836	1876
1869	Hull.....	Jobson, Fred'k J., D.D.	London.....	....	1834	....
1870	Burslem.....	Farrar, John.....	Leeds.....	1854	....	....
1871	Manchester....	James, John H., D.D...	London.....	....	1836	....
1872	London.....	Wiseman, L. H., M.A..	Mission House..	....	1840	1875
1873	Newcastle-Tyne	Perks, G. T., M.A.....	Mission House..	....	1840	1877
1874	Camborne.....	Punshon, W. M., L.L.D.	London.....	....	1845	....
1875	Sheffield.....	Smith, G., D.D.....	London.....	....	1844	....
1876	Nottingham....	M'Auley, Alexander...	London.....	....	1840	....
1877	Bristol.....	Pope, William B., D.D..	Didsbury.....	....	1841	....
1878	Bradford.....	Rigg, James H., D.D...	London.....	....	1845	....



PART II.

AMERICAN METHODISM.





*Francis Robberg*  
Wesley Chapel, 1771.

From "The Lost Portrait," recovered by Dr. Roberts, of Baltimore.





STRAWBRIDGE'S LOG CHAPEL ON SAM'S CREEK, MARYLAND.

## CHAPTER XV.

### METHODISM TRANSPLANTED TO AMERICA.

**M**ETHODISM is divine. It sweeps in the gale, glows with the fire, and speaks with the tongues of Pentecost.

The early Methodists were apostolic: nothing short of the ends of the earth could stop them. They extended their lines to India and Africa on the east, and to the wilds of America on the west; not, like so many others, to gain and govern in the name of the Lord, but always to give and to save.

Puritanism, disappointed in old England, came to New England to found an empire for itself: Anglicanism, by virtue—say rather, vice—of its political *status* at home, claimed supremacy in most of the Southern Colonies; Methodism, transplanted hither in the hearts of a few humble emigrants who never dreamed of empire, soon outgrew



them both, and in a little while became the great religious power of the land; yet not as having dominion over its faith, but as a helper of its joy. Methodism never martyred a man for his opinions. It has carried no weapons other than Bibles, Hymn Books, and Disciplines; its only inquisitions have been love-feasts and classes; its only camps have been camp-meetings: nevertheless, so grand has been its march and so swift its career of victory, that certain sagacious souls have thought they saw in its doctrines the scheme of the ultimate theology, and in its order the outlines of the ultimate Church.

**The "Heroic Age" of Methodism.**—So wonderful is the history of this form of religious life, that he who sets out to record it finds himself both elated and confused by the mighty rush of events. Planting himself on some eminence to which his love and loyalty have lifted him, the historian levels his glass and sweeps the horizon to search for first things. And these are some of them:—

On a little stumpy clearing in the woods of Maryland an irrepressible Irishman has built a log-cabin, in which he is preaching Free Grace as he experienced it in a Methodist Society across the sea:—down in a low street in the city of New York a young Irish-German Wesleyan immigrant has been pushed into a lay pastorate by a strong-souled Methodist woman:—in a fort away up the Hudson River, at a place called Albany, a British redcoat has taken up the sword of the Spirit, and is proving himself a good Methodist soldier of Jesus Christ, and a rare, rousing preacher withal:—and the distance from him to them is so short, and such large things have come of their small doings, that before he is aware of it these pioneers assume heroic size. He begins to see in these men who organized some little Methodist Societies like those they left in England and Ireland, and in that woman who planned a Methodist meeting-house and brought out a hidden Methodist preacher, the founders of a great spiritual empire—superior beings, before whose faith stood out in bold relief in 1766 all that belongs to American Methodism in 1879.

But hero-worship, however poetic, is neither history nor religion. Another look at those shadowy forms shows the observer his error. The fires they set have, indeed, spread over half the continent, and may yet overrun the world; but the people who kindled them were nowise different from other good Methodists. The prophecy and the power



were in the fire, and not in the natures of those who kindled it. Even the live coals wherewith the flames were lighted came from British altars whereon God had wrought again, in spiritual power and glory, the burning miracle of Carmel.

At length the observer comes to see that if he would deal in history instead of poetry he must shut up his glass, come down from his eminence, go back in thought to those early years, take his place as near as may be by the side of those early Methodists, enter into their lives, go to class-meeting with them—it will not be necessary to backslide with some of them—join in their struggles to build a house of worship, sing and pray and shout with them in the swift-coming revivals, go down to the sea with them to meet the elders and the Bishop who come with the benedictions of God and of his servant John Wesley upon their heads, invade the wilderness with "the saddlebags men," listen at rude camp-meeting altars where tongues of fire are speaking, mourn with the faithful over the strife of wrong-headed brethren, learn how to mollify magistrates, face down mobs, outwit the skulking Indian, out-argue the well-intrenched Calvinist, put out some of the false lights of Unitarianism and Universalism by preaching a Gospel larger and a better salvation than they ever offered, trample on State-churchism till it has been ground into the dust, and thus, step by step, march down the century hand in hand with the grandfathers and grandmothers, watching the up-springing steeples and listening to the call of college bells, till he reaches the time when their grandsons and granddaughters are numbered by millions at home, and have actually put a missionary girdle around the earth. If the historian can make this journey and not get lost, he may be able to construct an outline of the history of Methodism out of the notes he has taken by the way.

When he enters the cabins, the class-meetings, and the congregations of these pioneers, he finds that they are made of the same materials, and in about the same proportions, with the same strong points and the same weak ones which he observes in his brethren and in himself. Is it disloyalty in him that he ventures for a moment to prefer the preaching of Simpson to that of Asbury, and thinks he sees a large improvement in the Church during its first hundred years, not only in its methods but in the average of its men?



Here comes Jesse Lee; a man so large that it actually takes two horses to transport him; starting off to explore the wilderness of Maine; and as the historian keeps his jocund company, and hears him preach some three or four great sermons over and over till he has come to know and love them wondrous well, is it heresy to hint that it were easier to do the work this man is doing than to build the People's Church, or face the self-same Boston congregation with two fresh sermons a Sunday for three successive years? Can it be possible, after all he has dreamed and heard and read of the "old-fashioned Methodists," that the former days were no better than these?

While he hesitates, a few significant facts straggle into his recollection. Methodism is, as it always was, a training school. Asbury came to be great by trying to grow as fast as his diocese; and must it not still further broaden a Bishop to span the earth in his thought and his journey, and deepen him to stand where he continually feels the thrill of the life of a great, strong, happy, aggressive Church, whose place is in the vanguard of Christendom, and whose songs already echo round the world?

There were giants, too, among the old Presiding Elders, with districts large enough to form whole States; but the circuits also were large in proportion, and the membership widely scattered. The chief struggle of that day was with distance. Does not the Discipline hint at this when it divides the regular ministry into "traveling deacons" and "traveling elders?" as, also, when it says, "The duties of a Presiding Elder are, To travel through his district?"

But a traveling elder might get on more easily atop of a good horse, such as the fathers used to ride, with Methodist houses miles apart, than on the pavements of a great city with a crammed, crowded, jostling district on his hands, across which he can travel luxuriously in half a day.

Again, the broader culture of the men, the larger opportunities of the women, and the earlier conversion of the children, stand forth as prominent and encouraging facts in the recent life of the Church; and thus, in spite of poetry and tradition, the historian comes at length to doubt if the golden age of Methodism be not out of sight before him, instead of on the dim horizon behind.

Does he thus lose sight of the "heroic period?"



By no means: the heroic period has lasted until now. When it shall have ended Methodism itself will have come to an end.

The true philosophy of Methodist history, therefore, does not seek to account for its success by assigning great abilities to those who wrought in its first fields. Its force is not in its personality, but in its divine inspiration.

**Methodism a Theological Reform.**—The theology of most of the Colonial Churches was overloaded with logic. Some of its peculiar and prominent features (which, since they have become so odious it were almost a discourtesy to exhibit, if this history could be at all complete without them) were mere inferences deduced from selected texts in the argumentative portions of the Pauline epistles: a heavy burden for believers to carry, and one which, like other borrowed trouble, they were forced to bear alone. There were vital truths in this theology common to all evangelical creeds, which used to reach men's consciences, generally rather late in life; but the great theological doctors of the country, with occasional grand exceptions like Edwards and Jarratt, were so occupied in drawing inferences in support of their doctrinal system that the preaching of the Gospel, pure and simple, was very much neglected; and it was in spite of these doctrinal peculiarities, which were temporarily laid aside in times of revival, that the work of grace went on at all.

And what shall be said of the God who was feared—not loved—under the teachings of this theological system?

He was, indeed, a trinity in unity; but he was a being who was, first of all, a governor: hence, whatever deity this may have been, it could not have been "The Father." A Son of God was preached who did not die for "every man:" or, if he did, the benefits of his sacrifice were carefully fended off from all but a favored few: hence, whatever Saviour this may have been, it was not "Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." A Holy Spirit was described who either could not or would not save a soul except by slow degrees, and then would not suffer him to know whether he were saved or not: thus, whatever Spirit this may have been, it certainly was not "The Comforter."

With such fundamental errors in the conception of the Divine Being it was no wonder that, while the population was rapidly increasing, true religion was rapidly declining.



Against the so-called orthodoxy of the time three chief opponents had risen up: Universalism, Unitarianism, and Infidelity; each, in its way, a protest against the Calvinistic idea of the Deity, and each, in its way, a serious danger to the rising young nation. It was in such a time of need that the Lord, whose tender mercies are over all his works, sent Methodism across the sea to declare him to his children, just as he has declared himself in his word.

When the Methodist preachers began to set forth a Father who is not willing that any of his children should perish; a Saviour who tasted death for every man; and a Spirit whose special work it is to sanctify believers, and to witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, the Lord owned their word as he did not own the words of much more able and classical and theological men in the pulpits of America; and multitudes of sinners, finding out who God really was, began to believe on him, seek him, and love him.

The Methodists taught a plan of salvation large enough to save completely all who stood in need of it; plain enough for any one to find who looked for it; actually within the reach of any one who sought it; and free for any one who would take it.

John Calvin's God was an absolute autocrat; an infinite Will, whose subjects had no rights which he was bound to respect; Methodism preached the Deity whose other name is Love, whose kingdom of grace is a constitutional monarchy, the basis of which is pardon for penitents, purity, joy, and power for believers, and for all sinners, however weak and wicked, the tenderest patience and absolute fair play. No wonder, then, that a Church with such a theology should have distanced all others. No wonder that it should have modified the theology to which it opposed itself; and that even the overflow of Methodism should have been among the large benedictions enjoyed by other evangelical communions. This was, doubtless, God's set time, and his appointed way, in which to favor his American Zion.

**1766 and Before.**—The event officially chosen from which to reckon the age of Methodism in America is the preaching of the first sermon by Philip Embury in his own house in New York in 1766; but there are events of no little interest that appear to have preceded this, which, if too small to form the first chapter of American Methodism, are, nevertheless, worthy to stand as a preface.



Neither the mission of the Wesleys nor the preaching tours of Whitefield can be regarded as the beginning of any thing permanent in America. Wesley in Savannah was a grievous failure; and Whitefield formed no Societies out of the fruits of his labors, but left the ingatherings of the harvest to the regular ministry. No doubt this was the only course open to him, for if he had interfered in any way with the established order of things, even his fiery eloquence would not have saved him from the religious wrath of orthodox Colonial believers.



ROBERT STRAWBRIDGE.

From Dr. Roberts's "Centennial Album," Baltimore, 1866.

**Robert Strawbridge.**—The first Methodist immigrant who opened his commission as a local preacher in the American Colonies—if the statement of Bishop Asbury, and of certain other contemporary authorities is to be accepted—was Robert Strawbridge, a genuine Irishman, lively, improvident, full of religion, who came to America with his family about the year 1760, and settled on Sam's Creek in the woods of Maryland.

Strawbridge was born in Drumsnagh, County of Leitrim, the south-



western county of the northern Province of Ulster, on the borders of that section of Ireland which is famous in Methodist history as the field traversed by Gideon Onseley, and swept by the great revivals which followed his labors and those of his comrades in preaching, praying, and circulating the Scriptures in the Irish language.

It was no light thing to set up for a Methodist preacher in that day and place, and young Strawbridge was forced to leave his native county and take refuge in Sligo, where the Wesleyans were numerous enough to protect themselves.

As a man of business he was not successful. His mission seemed to be that of a roving exhorter; nevertheless, he married a wife whose patience was quite as admirable as her husband's zeal, and in 1760 he set off for America, to better his unpromising fortunes. Having settled his family in a small cabin on Sam's Creek, in Frederick County, a few miles north-west from the town of Baltimore, he began the double work of farming and preaching; his own house serving as a chapel.\*

It appears that his preaching thrived better than his farming, for he

\* The date of Strawbridge's arrival in America has been variously stated; sometimes as late as 1766. The latest researches into this much disputed historic territory indicate that the time set down by the Rev. W. Hamilton, in his article in the "Methodist Quarterly Review," of July, 1856, is approximately correct. He says Strawbridge emigrated to this country "in 1759 or 1760." He also states that "a Society consisting of twelve or fifteen persons was formed as early as 1763 or 1764, and soon after a place of worship was erected, called 'The Log Meeting-house,' about a mile from the residence of Mr. Strawbridge."—*Methodist Quarterly Review*, vol. viii, pp. 435, 436.

Mr. Michael Laird, of Philadelphia, whose father was intimate with Strawbridge, is quoted by the late Dr. Roberts, of Baltimore, in his "Centenary Album," as authority for the statement that "Mr. Strawbridge came to America in 1760 with his family, and settled on Sam's Creek. He opened his house for divine worship at once, and continued preaching therein regularly. His congregations were large, many of whom came to see and hear the man who, for a wonder, was reported to preach and pray extemporaneously." If he opened his house for preaching "at once," instead of waiting for five or six years, as was the case with Embury, who reached New York that same year, then, of course, he takes precedence of all American Methodist preachers except Captain Webb.

The following extracts from Bishop Asbury's Journal are also cited as proof texts. In 1801 the Bishop held a Conference at the house of Henry Willis, on Pipe Creek, in the vicinity of Mr. Strawbridge's cabin and log chapel, and in his "Journal," vol. iii, page 24, new edition, he makes this entry: "Here Mr. Strawbridge formed the first Society in Maryland and America." The italics are his own.

"This," says Dr. Roberts, "was written after the reception of information on the ground itself. By reference to his Journal it will be found that he arrived on April 30, 1801, at Alexander Warfield's on Sam's Creek, and from there went to Henry Willis's, on Pipe Creek, where he proposed to hold the Conference with about forty preachers. From the relation of the Warfield family to the Log Meeting-house, and from the full knowledge of Henry Willis himself," (who was one of Asbury's most distinguished preachers,) "concern-



soon had organized several little Societies; and, as is stated on his monument in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Baltimore: "He built the Log Meeting-house in Frederick County, Maryland, 1764, the first in America." This structure, which has now been replaced by "The Stone Chapel," at once became the center of attraction to large numbers of people, both white and black. It was a twice-sacred spot to the Strawbridge household, because under its rude altar two of their children were buried; it was also the cathedral church of Strawbridge's little diocese, into which he organized his Societies, and over which he presided in true episcopal fashion; travel-



THE STONE CHAPEL.

ing it, it is rendered indubitable that the Bishop here received more correct information than he had previously, and was induced to write in his Journal what he did."

Dr. Wakeley, on the other hand, in his "Lost Chapters of Methodist History," doubts the correctness of the above entry, as, indeed, of many other of the Bishop's notes; they being often jotted down hastily, sometimes in the saddle, and thus likely to be full of errors in dates, as they certainly are in names of persons and places.

As a reply to this the Rev. Isaac Cook, a prominent Baltimore authority, has pointed out another entry by Bishop Asbury in his Journal, vol. iii, page 454: "We came to son Francis Hollingsworth's, Little York. . . . I sit seven hours a day looking over and hearing read my transcribed Journal; we have examined and approved up to 1807. As a record of the early history of Methodism in America my Journal will be of use." This would seem to do away with Dr. Wakeley's objection to the Journals up to a point far past the entry concerning Mr. Strawbridge. An error so great as that assumed by Wakeley could not reasonably be supposed to escape the notice of both the author and the transcriber, and thus the probability remains that the disputed entry is correct.

This, however, does not invalidate the generally accepted date of 1766, as the time from which to reckon the commencement of the Methodist era in America. Bishop Simpson, in his "Cyclopedia of Methodism" points out the fact that the Log Meeting-house was never finished, and indeed never became, in the ordinary sense, a Methodist Church at all, since it was never owned by a Methodist Society. Those who are interested in this discussion will not fail to remember that in the settlement of the proper date from which to count the first century of British Methodism there was a similar difficulty; which was at length overcome by balancing the importance of one event against the priority of another. Such, also, appears to have been the official action of our own Church authorities in a precisely similar case.



ing and preaching to the neglect of his worldly affairs, and even taking it upon himself to baptize the children and celebrate the Lord's Supper; an assumption which afterward brought him into conflict with Asbury; who, fresh from the training of Mr. Wesley, regarded the celebration of sacraments as the exclusive prerogative of the regular clergy.

It was evident that the Lord was with this little Church in the wilderness in spite of its alleged irregularity, for its numbers increased in an encouraging manner, and in the log chapel on Sam's Creek as many as four or five preachers were raised up, who, under the direction of Strawbridge, traveled little circuits on Sabbath, and worked for their daily bread on the other days of the week. If this was not Methodism it was something very much like it; and when the regular preachers arrived from England they found in this zealous lay minister and his band of lay helpers a very hopeful beginning for a regular Methodist circuit.

From 1760 to 1776 Strawbridge lived on his farm on Sam's Creek; which, had it not been for the toil of his wife and the charity of his neighbors, would have failed to keep himself and family from want. At length one of his wealthy friends, Captain Charles Ridgely, of Baltimore County, gave him the life lease of a plantation at Long Green, where he ended his days in plenty and peace. A considerable number of Methodists had by this time been raised up in the vicinity of the Log Meeting-house, and in 1783 it was replaced by a larger one, built of stone. This church was the scene of a great revival in 1800, in which year it was again rebuilt as it appears on the preceding page.

**Methodism in New York.**—"Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

It was during the early part of the year 1766 that the people of one of the humbler quarters of the city of New York were startled by the outbreak of a new form of religion in their midst. A carpenter, by the name of Embury, who lived in a cottage on Barrack-street, (now Park Place,) had taken it upon himself to be a preacher, and had set up a Church in his own house. The place was soon crowded with people, who were astonished at the preaching, delighted with the singing, and struck by the common-sense doctrines proclaimed by their quiet neighbor.



In addition to the preaching and praying, all of which was done with neither manuscript nor prayer-book, there were secret meetings to which only the initiated were admitted; where it was said that women often prayed, and even stood up and made speeches just like the men.

"Who are these strange people?" was the eager inquiry.



OLD "WESLEY CHAPEL," JOHN-STREET, NEW YORK.

"They call themselves Methodists."

"Methodists! What are they?"

"O, they are professors of a new-fangled religion set up by one John Wesley in England. These are some of his disciples."

"Just come over, have they?"

"No; they have lived in New York five or six years."

"How does it happen that nobody has heard of them before?"

"Well, they are a modest, quiet sort of people; came originally from some place in Germany called the Palatinate, a little principality



on the French side of the Rhine; but being of the Protestant religion they were driven out of their own country by the Popish King Louis XIV., and scattered over Switzerland, England, and Ireland. This was somewhere about 1690. In 1710 the British Government sent out nearly three thousand of them to the colonies of New York, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, and more are occasionally arriving along with the native English and Irish immigrants."

"Are these Palatines all Methodists?"

"By no means. Embury and his wife, a woman named Heck, and



*Phil. Embury*  
September 16, 1763.

two or three others, are the only ones ever heard of here. About fifty families of these Palatines settled in the county of Limerick, in Ireland, some fifty years ago: fine people they were, too; some of the very best in the whole island. After awhile Mr. Wesley's preachers went into those parts and converted some of them, and this little handful of Irish-German Methodists has somehow been thrown into New York."

Such was the scanty information obtainable concerning these strange people, who, instead of waiting, as ordinary colonists did, for



a minister of their own faith to establish a Church for them, set about establishing a Church for themselves.

**Philip Embury.**—Whether the first male Methodist of New York was born in Ireland or in that French province of German-speaking people formerly called the Rhine Palatinate—and since included in the territory of Bavaria, which is now a part of the great German empire—is not certainly known. The date of his birth is also uncertain; it may have been in 1728 or 1730. His first schooling was in the German language, but he afterward attended an English school. He was simply a fair specimen of the boys of the Palatine village of Ballingran, or Balligarrane; which was a charming bit of German thrift and Protestant morality in the midst of the Papist population of Limerick County. When his school days were over he learned the carpenter's trade; learned it thoroughly, to his praise be it spoken; married a wife of his own people, and emigrated to New York when he was about thirty years of age.

Concerning the great event of his life, that is to say, his experience of saving grace, there is, fortunately, no uncertainty. Dr. Wakeley has produced, in Embury's own clear and beautiful hand, the following personal testimony: "On Christmas day, being Monday, the 25th of December, in the year 1752, the Lord shone into my soul by a glimpse of his redeeming love, being an earnest of my redemption in Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Of course this is a Methodist testimony; it would have been difficult to find any like it which were not Methodistic at that day.

In spite of his diffidence, the clearness of his experience and the substantial qualities of his mind caused him to be promoted to the position of class-leader, and afterward to that of local preacher; but preaching appears, from the first, to have been a cross for him, and his word was often with trembling and tears; but one look at his gentle German face must have been enough to show his hearers that he was honestly trying to do them good, that he was not ambitious for priestly honors, but was only venturing to preach because his duty to God and to them demanded it.

It was this native diffidence, no doubt, that led him into the serious error of hiding his light for the first five years of his life in New York; but it is plain that he did not fall into sin, as some of his



countrymen did, for when suddenly called on for a sermon, after five years' silence, he was able to stand up at once in the name of the Lord, and to preach in his own house to a little handful of his most intimate acquaintances—a task which he could not have performed, and one to which he would not have been invited, if his friends and neighbors had seen him falling from grace.

**The First Methodist Sermon in New York.**—The circumstance which has become historic as the beginning of American Methodism brings out the face of a woman whose piety was of a



EMBURY'S HOUSE.

more aggressive type, and by whose earnest appeal and energetic efforts a buried talent was brought forth, and the graces of the feeble company were strengthened, which seemed almost ready to perish.

BARBARA HECK\* was also of the Palatine stock; a woman of piety, persistence, and genius for affairs, in which last respect she

\*In view of the controversy concerning the name of this first Methodist woman in New York, whether it should be spelled with an "e" or an "i"—a question quite as large as some others on which much time and labor have been spent to less purpose—the author wrote to her grandson, Mr. George Heck, now residing in Prescott, Ontario, asking whether the heroine of early Methodism in New York were Barbara Hick or Heck. His reply is here inserted.

A yellow leaf from an old copy of "The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne," printed in London in



far excelled her cousin, Philip Embury. She was the wife of Paul Heck, and the family were among the party of emigrants which sailed from the port of Limerick for New York in 1760. There were a few Methodists among them, but for the most part they belonged to the Irish Church; a Protestant body, but one in which there was little preaching or profession of experimental religion. After their arrival in New York, with the exception of Embury and three or four others, they all finally lost their sense of the fear of God, became open worldlings, and some of them subsequently fell into still greater depths of sin.



BARBARA HECK.

Late in the year 1765 another vessel arrived in New York, bringing over Paul Ruckle, Luke Rose, Jacob Heck, Peter Barkman, and

1766, and once the property of the husband of this lady, bears the following, in clear, unmistakable letters: "Paul Heck, his book; price, twelve shillings." "The Christian Advocate and Journal," New York, September 30 and October 7, 1858, contains a number of affidavits of persons who were well acquainted with the family, all of whom call this lady "Barbara Heck." These are now before me: but doubtless the following letter will suffice:—

"PRESCOTT, June 23, 1879.

"To the Rev. W. H. DANIELS: Paul and Barbara Heck, my grandfather and grandmother, came to New York in 1760, remained there till the year 1770, and moved to a place called Camden, on Lake Champlain. They remained there till the year 1774, and then moved into Canada. Paul Heck and his sons, John, Jacob, and Samuel, were all well educated, and would not be likely to change the way of spelling their names, and I have never seen it spelled any other way than Heck. In the late Rev. J. B. Wakeley's history called 'Lost Chapters,' etc., you will see *fac-similes* of signatures of parties connected with early Methodism in New York, and among them you will see one written by my grandfather (Paul Heck) while he resided there. I will also inclose you two leaves out of an old book belonging to my grandfather, and I suppose he wrote his name in them when in New York, and you will see that he spells his name Heck. I will also send you an old 'New York Christian Advocate and Journal,' of October 7, 1858, in which you will see an article from the pen of one of our ministers,



Henry Williams, Palatines all; some of them relatives of Embury, while Ruckle was a brother of Barbara Heck; but it does not appear that any of them were Methodists. In one of her visits to the newcomers Mrs. Heck found a party engaged in a game of cards. This had the effect of awakening her to a sense of the danger which threatened them in their new homes, where many old restraints were weakened and many new temptations beset them; she therefore seized the cards, threw them into the fire, and gave her friends a solemn warning against sin and an exhortation to holiness.

She was now thoroughly aroused. If the new people were falling into careless and wicked ways it was no more than some of the previous company of emigrants had already done; and what was to prevent them from all becoming backsliders together unless they resumed the use of the means of grace which they used to enjoy at home?

(Rev. J. Carroll, and who still lives in the city of Toronto, Canada,) that Barbara Heck, who broke up the card party in New York, came to Canada with her husband, Paul Heck, and lived the remainder of her life here, died, and was buried in the old Blue Church burying-ground, about three miles west of Prescott.

"When my brother John and myself went to New York, in the summer of 1859, in company with the Rev. John Carroll, we took along with us the Rev. J. B. Wakeley, from Poughkeepsie, where he was then residing; and when we got to New York we all met at the Book Room, and the then editor, the Rev. Dr. A. Stevens, and Bishop Janes, and a few others were present; and after comparing notes and documents and some old relics, Dr. Stevens remarked, after comparing the signatures of Paul Heck from Canada and that produced by the Rev. Mr. Wakeley from the old recording steward's book of New York, that they must have been written by one person; and he (Dr. Stevens) said that there was something about the handwriting of Paul Heck which made the evidence incontestible. Bishop Janes was also satisfied that we were correct and Dr. Wakeley wrong. A year or two after the interview in New York the Rev. Mr. Wakeley made us a short visit, and promised to have it corrected in his next edition, but I have never heard whether the second edition was published.

"On page 91 of Wakeley's 'Lost Chapters' you will see Paul Heck's signature, and this same Paul Heck was one of the first trustees of John-street Church, and also one to whom the land (on which the church stood) was originally leased, and he was the *husband* of Barbara Heck, not the son, as Wakeley has it on the same page, (91.) You will see in the 'Advocate and Journal,' which I send you, that Wakeley mixes up Paul Hick, of New York, who married Hannah Dean, as one of the first trustees; but he was not one of the first trustees, for he was only sixteen years old when the first John-street Church was built, and he was not a member of the Church till two years after it was built, as you will see by reading page 544 of 'Lost Chapters.' On page 578 of 'Lost Chapters' you will see the names of all the first trustees, appointed in the year 1768, and among them the name of Paul Hick, (should be Paul Heck,) and on page 581 ('Lost Chapters') you will see that in 1786 a new batch of trustees were appointed, and among the number one Paul Hick. This Paul was Hannah Dean's husband, not Barbara Ruckle's husband.

"Yours truly,

"GEORGE HECK."



Her cousin was a licensed preacher; he must open the Bible and open his mouth; there were a few surviving Methodists within her acquaintance; these must be gathered into a Society just such as they used to have in Balligarrane. With this new purpose firmly settled in her mind, she started for the house of Embury, gave him an account of what she had seen and done, and begged him to take up his cross at once and begin to preach in his own house.

It was no easy task for a modest man like Embury to resume in cold blood the duty which was always a heavy task for him, and which had now for so long been laid aside; but the woman was determined; she argued, urged, and finally, falling upon her knees, adjured him in God's name to preach; and when he, with a sense of horror lest his neglect might result in the loss of souls, consented, she hastily went out and brought in five or six of their neighbors, and to this little congregation Philip Embury, in his own house, preached his first sermon in America. Two classes were presently organized, one of women and the other of men; doubtless Barbara Heck was the leader of one, and Philip Embury of the other.

No small excitement was caused by these little assemblies. Spectators came in crowds, including some soldiers from the barracks near by, and among the first-fruits of the revival which crowned their feeble labors were three members of the regimental band, who had been attracted by the singing, and who became very useful afterward as exhorters. The next victory was among the inmates of the poor-house, to whom Embury was invited to preach. Auspicious beginning! "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" Was it not one of the proofs which Christ gave of his Messiahship that "the poor have the Gospel preached unto them?" Herein, also, appears the divine authenticity of Methodism, both in England and America.

The cottage of Embury being far too small for the new uses to which it was put, a larger room was secured near by; and to pay the rent of this room another means of grace, to wit, a collection of money, was added to those already in use. The Society flourished, was of one heart and one mind, and evidently increased in favor both with God and man.



**Captain Webb.**—The fame of these doings spread far and wide; it reached even to Albany, where was a man who seems to have been



CAPTAIN WEBB.

divinely stationed there as a re-enforcement to the little band in New York; awaiting only its getting into position, hoisting its colors, and opening the spiritual campaign.

In the joint English and Colonial expedition, in 1745, against the French stronghold of Louisburg, which commanded the main entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, there was a young British captain by the name of Webb. He was a man of some wealth, good education, and may have adopted the profession of arms for the love of adventure, or to escape

a life of idleness—that bane of so many gentlemen of fortune.

It was a dark day for Captain Webb on which they stormed and carried that fort, for he lost his right eye in the battle, and it was almost a miracle that he did not lose his life. A bullet hit him in the eyebrow and glanced into the eye, but, instead of keeping straight on into the brain, it again turned downward into his mouth. When the fight was over he heard himself pronounced a dead man, but his senses had so far returned that he was able to deny it, and after three months in hospital he again returned to duty.

His next campaign—if the somewhat conflicting reports may be harmonized—was with General Braddock, in 1755, against the French Fort Duquesne, where the smoky city of Pittsburgh now stands. Here he was one of the very few officers who survived the ambush and slaughter of that terrible battle known as “Braddock’s defeat;” but, like Washington, with whom he fought that day, he could not be killed, for God had further work for him to do, though in quite a different field from that of fighting the French and Indians



Four years afterward he scaled the heights of Abraham with General Wolfe, on which occasion he was again wounded; this time in the arm. The last of the French Canadian wars having ended with the capture of Quebec, which followed this victory, Captain Webb returned with his regiment to England, disabled for hard campaigning, though still in the prime of life.

The conversion of this man under a sermon by Mr. Wesley, at Bristol, which occurred in the year 1765, was a notable event for the Methodist Society, with which he at once united. It was not long before it was discovered that he was a great preacher as well as a brave soldier. Entering a Methodist congregation at Bath, which was disappointed by its circuit preacher, he advanced to the altar in his regimentals, and addressed them with great effect, chiefly narrating his own Christian experience. Wesley, who delighted in the disciplinary regularity, the obedience, and courage of military men, not a few of whom entered his itinerant ranks, lost no time in persuading him to accept a preacher's license, and straightway Captain Webb became one of the great lights of English Methodism. Wesley has left on record his very high opinion of this soldier of the Cross. After hearing him preach in the Old Foundry, he writes:—

"I admire the wisdom of God in still raising up various preachers, according to the various tastes of men. The captain is full of life and fire; therefore, although he is not deep or regular, yet many who would not hear a better preacher flock to hear him, and many are convinced under his preaching."

Of his personal piety one of his intimate friends at Bath says:—

"He experienced much of the power of religion in his own soul. He wrestled day and night with God for that degree of grace which he stood in need of, that he might stand firm as the beaten anvil to the stroke, and he was favored with those communications from above which made him bold to declare the whole counsel of God. His evidence of the favor of God was so bright that he never lost a sense of that blessed truth, 'the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin.'"

His natural powers of oratory greatly delighted John Adams—afterward President—who declared that the old soldier was one of the most eloquent men he ever heard. Another admirer calls him



"a perfect Whitefield in declamation;" and still another thus describes his power over his audiences: "They saw the warrior in his face, and heard the missionary in his voice. Under his holy eloquence they trembled, they wept, and fell down under his mighty word." He traveled widely in his own country, preaching to great crowds, which he attracted partly by his preaching and partly by his regimentals, and he was the means of the conversion of great numbers of people.

How this Boanerges happened to be at Albany in 1766, living in his own house, which he opened for religious services, and acting as barrack-master of the English garrison, does not fully appear; but it was doubtless a part of the providential scheme for planting Methodism in America; and to his faith, his zeal, his talents, and his liberality, the human side of this movement owes the largest measure of its initial success.

The news of a Methodist Society in New York, and of a revival of religion already crowning its efforts, straightway brought Captain Webb down from Albany to see it. His first appearance in the preaching room, in full uniform, which he wore at Church as well as on any other soldierly duty, was a rather startling event to the congregation; but their surprise soon gave place to delight when they found that he was a Methodist, and, what was more, a preacher. The captain was, as has already been seen, a great man in his way; or, rather, in several ways; and just those ways in which the little Society stood most in need of help. They needed a leader—Webb was born to command. They needed another preacher of more experience, learning, and power—Webb was one of the best preachers then on the Continent of America. They needed money wherewith to house their young Society—Webb was both rich and generous. Truly, if they had been indulged by a choice out of all the Methodist preachers in existence, except Wesley himself, it would have been a hard matter to suit themselves better than God had suited them, and that, too, before they had asked him for a preacher at all.

**The Rigging Loft.**—Of course, with such a preacher came a large increase of congregation. The Methodist meeting, with its hearty fellowship, its delightful singing, and its red-coated minister, who preached with two swords lying on the desk before him—one of them the sword of the Spirit, the other the sword of a captain in his Majes-



ty's regulars—was now one of the marvels of New York; and to accommodate the increasing crowds a loft over a sail-maker's shop in William-street was secured. It was eighteen feet in width by sixty in length, but it would not hold half the people who came twice a week to hear the brave Captain Webb and his faithful Lieutenant Embury. How happy they were! How happy people always are in revivals till somebody gets "hurt;" or becomes too proud or stubborn to lose himself in the greatness of the work!



THE RIGGING LOFT.

**The First Methodist Church in America.**—And now that "elect lady," Barbara Heck, receives what she believes to be an inspiration in answer to her prayers on this very subject, in the form of a plan for a meeting-house. It is a large house, two stories in height, built of stone—will cost, with the land to build it on, nearly a thousand pounds; and where is all the money to come from?



Embury, with his German caution and his mannish sagacity, proposed that they should lease a bit of ground for twenty-one years, and build a cheap wooden meeting-house; but Sister Barbara had seen her church in a vision, and had heard the words, "*I, the Lord, will do it,*" and a woman of that stamp, with such a vision in her soul, knows nothing of failure or fear. Did she not project the Society out of almost nothing? Who knows, then, but she can show them how to build a church? Thus the scheme which looked so wild and hopeless to merely speculative eyes was, after two days of solemn prayer and fasting, deliberately adopted, and Captain Webb led the subscription list with the sum of thirty pounds, the largest amount given by any one subscriber. This was in the early part of 1768.

The subscription paper bears the names of nearly two hundred and fifty persons, including all classes, from his worship the Mayor, the aristocracy, and certain of the clergy, down to negro servants who were so poor that they had only a single word for a name.

The chapel was built of stone, faced with blue plaster. It was sixty feet in length by forty-two in breadth. Dissenters were not yet allowed to erect "regular churches" in the city; the new building was, therefore, provided with a fire-place and chimney to avoid transgressing the law. There were side galleries to the building, which for a long time were accessible only by rude ladders; the seats had no backs: it was a rough, unfinished place, but it was very neat and clean, and the floor was sprinkled over with sand as white as snow. Embury, being a skillful carpenter, wrought diligently upon the structure. With his own hands he built the pulpit, and on the memorable 30th of October, 1768, mounted the desk he had made, and dedicated the humble temple by a sermon on Hosea x, 12: "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."

The house was soon thronged. Within two years from its consecration the building and the yard in front of it had a congregation of nearly a thousand people. It was called Wesley Chapel; the first in the world that ever bore that name.

From New York as a center the good work began to spread in various directions, especially south and south-west. Captain Webb, who was now free to travel, having been placed on the retired list



with full pay on account of his soldierly services, gave himself up to the work of an evangelist, besides taking the church building enterprise under his especial care. In addition to his gift he advanced the sum of three hundred pounds without interest to help on that work, begged money for it, sold religious books and gave the profits to it, and did a great deal of good preaching in the house after it was opened for divine worship. There were relatives of his wife living at Jamaica, on Long Island; thither he went, hired a house to preach in, and had the joy of seeing twenty-four persons converted. In New Jersey he formed Societies at Pemberton, Burlington, and Trenton. In Delaware he preached at Newcastle, Wilmington, and in the woods on the shores of the Brandywine. He was the pioneer of Methodism in Philadelphia, where he preached in a sail-loft and formed a class of seven members in 1767 or '68, and where he collected over thirty pounds for his beloved Wesley Chapel in New York. He also gave liberally toward the purchase of St. George's Church, in Philadelphia, two years afterward; for Captain Webb was as generous as he was brave, and it was his firm belief that a covetous Christian, a stingy Methodist, a convert whose purse was not converted, was no Christian, no Methodist, no convert at all.

Having now a work on his hands which was increasing and spreading with great rapidity, he appealed to his British brethren for money, and to Mr. Wesley for preachers to help in carrying it on. Not satisfied with this, and having American Methodism so much at heart, he went to England in 1772 in its interest; preached in London, Dublin, and elsewhere; made a stirring appeal for recruits for America in the Leeds Conference, and in 1773 brought back with him Messrs. Rankin and Shadford; Messrs. Pilmoor and Boardman having already been sent out in response to his and other appeals. He continued his evangelistic labors with unabated zeal till after the breaking out of the War of the Revolution, being one of the last of the English preachers to leave; but finally the country became too hot for him, and he bade a reluctant good-bye to America, the scene of so many struggles and victories in his varied and eventful life.

On his return to England he secured a home for his family in Portland, on the heights of Bristol, but still traveled and preached extensively in chapels, in market-places, and in the open air, attended by



immense congregations. Having escaped so many dangers and deaths, he believed to the end of his days that a ministering spirit, a guardian angel, had through divine mercy attended him all the way in his diversified pilgrimage. From the year 1776 to 1782, a time of war by land and sea, he annually made a summer's visit to the French prisoners at Winchester, addressing them in their own language, which he had studied while in Canada. When he preached at Portsmouth crowds of soldiers and sailors listened to him with all possible veneration, and in Bristol and the neighboring country much spiritual good was effected.

In 1792 he was liberal and active in erecting the Portland Chapel, at Bristol, one of the most elegant chapels in the Methodist Connection if not in the kingdom, in which he preached his last sermon. He appeared to have had a presentiment for some time of his approaching end, and shortly before his death he spoke to an intimate friend of the place and manner of his interment, observing: "I should prefer a triumphant death; but I may be taken away suddenly. However, I know I am happy in the Lord, and shall be with him whenever he calls me hence, and that is sufficient."

One of the leading Wesleyan preachers thus writes of his closing life: "I spent a profitable hour with that excellent man, Captain Webb, of Bristol. He is, indeed, truly devoted to God, and has maintained a consistent profession for many years. He is now in his seventy-second year, and as active as many who have only attained their fiftieth. He gives to the cause of God and to the poor of Christ's flock the greater part of his income. He is waiting with cheerful anticipation for his great and full reward. He bids fair to go to the grave like a shock of corn fully ripe."

On the 21st of December, 1796, Captain Webb suddenly entered into the joy of his Lord.

The venerable soldier and evangelist was laid to rest in a vault made for him under the communion table at Portland Chapel; and the trustees erected a marble monument to his memory within its walls; the inscription whereon pronounced him "Brave, Active, Courageous—Faithful, Zealous, Successful—the principal instrument in erecting this chapel." His name must be forever illustrious in our ecclesiastical history, as, aside from the mere question of priority, he



must be considered the principal founder of the Methodist Church in America.

**Taylor's Letter to Wesley.**—The following letter to Mr. Wesley, written by Mr. Thomas Taylor, who had recently arrived from England and joined the New York Methodists, is well worth reading, for some side glimpses it gives at other things besides American Methodism. Only purely personal matter is omitted :—

"NEW YORK, 11th April, 1768.

"REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR:—I intended writing to you for several weeks past; but a few of us had a very material transaction in view; I therefore postponed writing until I could give you a particular account thereof. This was the purchasing of ground for building a preaching house upon, which, by the blessing of God, we have now concluded. But before I proceed, I shall give you a short account of the state of religion in this city.

"By the best intelligence I can collect, there was little either of the form or power of it until Mr. Whitefield came over, thirty years ago; and even after his first and second visits there appeared but little fruit of his labors. But during his visit fourteen or fifteen years ago there was a considerable shaking among the dry bones. Divers were savingly converted; and this work was much increased in his last journey, when his words were really like a hammer and like a fire. Most part of the adults were stirred up: great numbers pricked to the heart, and, by a judgment of charity, several found peace and joy in believing. The consequence of this work was, churches were crowded, and subscriptions raised for building new ones. Mr. Whitefield's example provoked most of the ministers to a much greater degree of earnestness. And by the multitudes of people, old and young, rich and poor, flocking to the churches, religion became an honorable profession.

"There was now no outward cross to be taken up therein. Nay, a person who could not speak about the grace of God and the new birth was esteemed unfit for genteel company. But in awhile, instead of pressing forward and growing in grace, (as he exhorted them,) the generality were pleading for the remains of sin and the necessity of being in darkness. They esteemed their opinions as the very essentials of Christianity, and regarded not holiness, either of heart or life.

"The above appears to me to be a genuine account of the state of religion in New York eighteen months ago, when it pleased God to rouse up Mr. Embury to employ his talent (which for several years had been hid, as it were, in a napkin) by calling sinners to repentance, and exhorting believers to let their light shine before men. He spoke at first only in his own house. A few were soon collected together and joined into a little Society, chiefly his own countrymen,



Irish-Germans. In about three months after, Brother White and Brother Souse, from Dublin, joined them. Then they rented an empty room in their neighborhood, which was in the most infamous street in the city, adjoining the barracks. For some time few thought it worth their while to hear: but God so ordered it by his providence that about fourteen months ago Captain Webb, barrack-master at Albany, (who was converted three years since at Bristol,) found them out, and preached in his regimentals. The novelty of a man preaching in a scarlet coat soon brought greater numbers to hear than the room could contain. But his doctrines were quite new to the hearers; for he told them point-blank 'that all their knowledge and religion were not worth a rush, unless their sins were forgiven, and they had "the witness of God's Spirit with theirs that they were the children of God."' This strange doctrine, with some peculiarities in his person, made him soon taken notice of; and obliged the little Society to look out for a larger house to preach in. They soon found a place that had been built for a rigging-house, sixty feet in length and eighteen in breadth.

"About this period Mr. Webb, whose wife's relations lived at Jamaica, Long Island, took a house in that neighborhood, and began to preach in his own house, and several other places on Long Island. Within six months about twenty-four persons received justifying grace, nearly half of them whites—the rest negroes. While Mr. Webb was (to borrow his own phrase) 'felling trees on Long Island,' Brother Embury was exhorting all who attended on Thursday evenings, and Sundays, morning and evening, at the rigging-house, to flee from the wrath to come. His hearers began to increase, and some gave heed to his report, about the time the gracious providence of God brought me safe to New York, after a very favorable passage of six weeks from Plymouth. It was the 26th day of October last when I arrived, recommended to a person for lodging; I inquired of my host (who was a very religious man) if any Methodists were in New York; he answered that there was one Captain Webb, a strange sort of man, who lived on Long Island, and who sometimes preached at one Embury's, at the rigging-house. In a few days I found out Embury. I soon found of what spirit he was, and that he was personally acquainted with you and your doctrines, and that he had been a helper in Ireland. He had formed two classes, one of the men, and the other of the women, but had never met the Society apart from the congregation, although there were six or seven men, and as many women, who had a clear sense of their acceptance in the Beloved.

"You will not wonder at my being agreeably surprised in meeting with a few here who have been, and desire again to be, in connection with you. God only knows the weight of affliction I felt on leaving my native country. But I have reason now to conclude God intended all for my good. . . .

"Mr. Embury lately has been more zealous than formerly, the consequence of which is, that he is more lively in preaching, and his gifts as well as graces are much increased. Great numbers of serious persons came to hear God's word as



for their lives; and their numbers increased so fast that our house for six weeks past would not contain half the people.

"We had some consultations how to remedy this inconvenience, and Mr. Embury proposed renting a small lot of ground for twenty-one years, and to exert our utmost endeavors to build a wooden tabernacle. A piece of ground was proposed; the ground rent was agreed for, and the lease was to be executed in a few days. We, however, in the meantime, had two several days for fasting and prayer for the direction of God and his blessing on our proceedings, and Providence opened such a door as we had no expectation of. A young man, a sincere Christian and constant hearer, though not joined in Society, not giving any thing toward this house, offered ten pounds to buy a lot of ground, went of his own accord to a lady who had two lots to sell, on one of which there is a house that rents for eighteen pounds per annum. He found the purchase money of the two lots was six hundred pounds, which she was willing should remain in the purchasers' possession, on good security. We called once more on God for his direction, and resolved to purchase the whole. There are eight of us who are joint purchasers, among whom Mr. Webb and Mr. Lupton are men of property. I was determined the house should be on the same footing as the Orphan House at Newcastle, and others in England; but as we were ignorant how to draw the deeds, we purchased for us and our heirs, until a copy of the writing is sent us from England, which we desire may be sent by the first opportunity.

"Before we began to talk of building the devil and his children were very peaceable; but since this affair took place many ministers have cursed us in the name of the Lord, and labored with all their might to stop their congregations from assisting us. But He that sitteth in the highest laughed them to scorn! Many have broken through, and given their friendly assistance. We have collected above one hundred pounds more than our own contributions, and have reason to hope in the whole we shall have two hundred pounds; but the house will cost us four hundred pounds more, so that unless God is pleased to raise up friends we shall yet be at a loss. I believe Mr. Webb and Mr. Lupton will borrow or advance two hundred pounds, rather than the building should not go forward; but the interest of money here is a great burden—being seven per cent.

"Some of our brethren proposed writing to you for a collection in England; but I was averse to this, as I well knew our friends there are overburdened already. Yet so far I would earnestly beg: if you would intimate our circumstances to particular persons of ability, perhaps God would open their hearts to assist this infant Society, and contribute to the first preaching house on the original Methodist plan in all America, (excepting Mr. Whitefield's Orphan House in Georgia:) but I shall write no more on this subject.

"There is another point far more material, and in which I must importune your assistance, not only in my own name, but also in the name of the whole Society. We want an able and experienced preacher; one who has both gifts



and grace necessary for the work. God has not, indeed, despised the day of small things. There is a real work of grace begun in many hearts by the preaching of Mr. Webb and Mr. Embury; but although they are both useful, and their hearts in the work, they want many qualifications for such an undertaking; and the progress of the Gospel here depends much upon the qualifications of preachers.

"In regard to a preacher, if possible we must have a man of wisdom, of sound faith, and a good disciplinarian: one whose heart and soul are in the work; and I doubt not but by the goodness of God such a flame will be soon kindled as would never stop until it reached the great South Sea. We may make many shifts to evade temporal inconveniences; but we cannot purchase such a preacher as I have described. Dear sir, I entreat you, for the good of thousands, to use your utmost endeavors to send one over. I would advise him to take shipping at Bristol, Liverpool, or Dublin, in the month of July, or early in August: by embarking at this season he will have fine weather in his passage, and probably arrive here in the month of September. He will see before winter what progress the Gospel has made.

"With respect to money for the payment of the preachers' passage over, if they could not procure it, we would sell our coats and shirts to procure it for them.

"I most earnestly beg an interest in your prayers, and trust you, and many of our brethren, will not forget the Church in this wilderness.

"I remain with sincere esteem, Rev. and dear sir,

"Your very affectionate brother and servant,

"THOMAS TAYLOR." \*

**Early Methodism in Philadelphia.**—In 1768 Captain Webb extended his evangelistic labors to the city of Philadelphia. The way had been opened for him by the good words of a Rev. Mr. Wrangle, a Swedish missionary, who had visited the city, and whose favorable impressions of Methodism from reading Mr. Wesley's writings induced him to advise his friends to receive the Methodist preachers; who, from their well-known enterprising spirit, he was sure could not be long in making their appearance. A class of seven members was organized, and the Methodist head-quarters was established in a sail-loft on Front-street, near Dock Creek. This new appointment, also, the missionary captain added to his already wide preaching circuit, and the little vine grew and flourished under the sunshine of God's favor and the dews of his grace.

\* Bangs, vol. i, p. 52.



**St. George's Church**, the oldest Methodist Church now standing in America, was for a quarter of a century the most spacious edifice owned by the denomination. Its walls and roof were erected by a Reformed German congregation, in 1763. It was a large building for those days, being no less than fifty-five by eighty-five feet, and its size and grandeur were the talk of all the country round. For nearly six years the congregation worshiped under its roof with its rough walls unfinished, and only the bare earth for a floor: at the end of



ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

that time, being hopelessly in debt, its trustees were arrested by the creditors, thrown into prison, and the house was put up at public auction to satisfy their demands. Among the bidders was a young man of feeble intellect, but of a wealthy family, who, from some foolish impulse, ran the building up to seven hundred and fifty pounds, Pennsylvania currency, (the "pound" in that colony was worth two dollars and sixty-six cents,) and he was declared its purchaser. The young man's father, not wishing to publicly expose his son's infirmity,



paid the money for the church, and then began to look about him to dispose of the property with which he was encumbered; and, hearing of Captain Webb and his little congregation, he offered to sell them the building for fifty pounds less than it had cost him. Captain Webb advised an acceptance of the offer; his martial spirit suggested the name; and thus St. George's Methodist Church was founded. The building then consisted of nothing but the four walls and a roof, but Captain Webb in full regimentals stood upon the bare ground and preached Sunday after Sunday to large and admiring crowds, who could well spare the elegances and even the conveniences of church architecture with such a preacher and such congregations.

For a long time this state of things continued, the Society being too poor to finish the church, so that its use for a riding-school by the British Army, when General Howe had his winter-quarters among the rebels in Philadelphia, was somewhat less suprising than if it had been possessed of doors, windows, floor, and the other usual appurtenances of a house of worship.

When peace was restored the congregation set about placing the church on a sound financial basis, and with this end in view adopted, as the church record shows, the somewhat questionable method of a lottery. Whether or not this brought money into the Church purse is not known. Every thing about the church was conducted in an economic way, and so late as 1800 sand and not carpets covered its floors.

The rear wall on either side of the pulpit contains two high monumental tablets, on which are recorded the names of the long list of the pastors of "Old St. George's," as the place is affectionately called; among which will be found the names of four Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Asbury, Whatcoat, Roberts, and Scott; Rev. Charles Pitman, a noted revivalist, under whose ministry the membership of the Church increased to the number of fifteen hundred; the late lamented Alfred Cookman; and others of great mark and sainted memory.

In a little room in the building which the iconoclast's hand has yet spared several Conferences were held. In it still stands the chair in which Bishop Asbury sat, the desk at which he wrote, the hard benches which the preachers occupied, and around the wall are the same old



## OUR PASTORS.

1769.

JOSEPH FILMORE  
 RICHARD HOAKMAN  
 FRANCIS ASBURY  
 RICHARD WRIGHT  
 THOMAS BARKIN  
 GEORGE SHADFORD  
 SAMUEL SPRAGUE  
 WILLIAM DURE  
 FREDERICK GARRETTSON  
 PHILIP COX  
 JOSHUA DUDLEY  
 DANIEL BEEF  
 JOHN COOPER  
 GEORGE MAIR  
 WILLIAM OLSEN DENNING  
 SAMUEL ROWE  
 ISAAC BOLLINS  
 JOHN COLEMAN  
 REuben ELLIS  
 JOHN BAGERTY  
 THOMAS HAWKINS  
 LEE ROY COLE  
 JOSEPH CROMWELL  
 JEREMIAH LAMBERT  
 ORA ELLIS  
 JAMES THOMAS  
 HENRY OGBURN  
 PETER MORAERTY  
 SAMUEL DUDLEY  
 WILLIAM THOMAS  
 LEMUEL GREEN  
 JOHN DICKINS  
 RICHARD WHITCOAT  
 HENRY WILLIS  
 THOMAS MOOREHEAD  
 JAMES M'CLARKY  
 EZEKIEL COOPER  
 WILSON LEE  
 JAMES MOORE  
 CHARLES CAVENDER  
 PHILIP BEEF  
 LAWRENCE WOODMAN  
 SAMUEL COATE  
 DANIEL HOBBS  
 WILLIAM P. CHANDLER  
 GEORGE ROBERTS  
 SOLOMON SHARP  
 THOMAS F. BAGGENT  
 WILLIAM RISHOP  
 WILLIAM COLBERT  
 JAMES SMITH  
 JOSEPH TUTTIN  
 THOMAS EDWARD  
 THOMAS WARE  
 RICHARD SNAITH  
 THOMAS DELA S.  
 DAVID MARTINE  
 JOHN WALKER  
 THOMAS SMITH

1808.

## OUR PASTORS.

1809.

JAMES BATEMAN  
 THOMAS BUDD  
 THOMAS BURCH  
 STEPHEN A. BORGEL  
 THOMAS BORING  
 WILLIAM HESTER  
 ROBERT R. ROBERTS  
 MASSING FOLGE  
 DAVID BEST  
 ROBERT BURCH  
 STEPHEN MARTINDALE  
 LAWRENCE LAWRENSON  
 JOHN PRICE  
 MARTIN RUTER  
 SYLVESTER G. HILL  
 JOSEPH BURLING  
 WILLIAM BYLAND  
 JAMES SMITH, *of Pa.*  
 JAMES SMITH, *of Pa.*  
 JAMES SMITH, *of Pa.*  
 THOMAS MILLER  
 WILLIAM THACHER  
 HENRY B. KING  
 DANIEL PARISH  
 CHARLES PITMAN  
 WILLIAM BARNES  
 JOSEPH HOLDEN  
 SAMUEL BERTIN  
 LEVIN M. PRETTYMAN  
 ROBERT LUTTON  
 SAMUEL DOUGHTY  
 JOHN LEITCH  
 JACOB GRUBER  
 LEVI SCOTT  
 THOMAS J. THOMPSON  
 BARTHOLOMEW WOOD  
 ASTHONY ATWOOD  
 LEVI STOKES  
 GEORGE D. COOKMAN  
 FRANCIS HODGSON  
 WILLIAM COOPER  
 JEFFERSON LEWIS  
 HENRY WHITE  
 ROBERT GERRY  
 THOMAS MCCLERELL  
 JOHN S. PORTER  
 WILLIAM ROBERTS  
 CHARLES A. DAVIS  
 JOSEPH LYBRAND  
 JOHN B. BAGANY  
 EDWIN L. JAMES  
 ISAACIUS T. COOPER  
 JOSEPH CASTLE  
 WILLIAM M. D. RYAN  
 JOHN A. ROCHE  
 JOHN D. CURTIS  
 JOHN F. BOONE  
 WILLIAM C. ROBINSON  
 ROBERT H. PATTERSON

1865.



wooden pegs on which they hung their broad-brimmed hats. It was in this Church that the first American Methodist Conference was held in the month of June, 1773.

This is the parent Society, from which have sprung the great family of ninety-three Methodist Churches that now stand in the city of Philadelphia and its immediate suburbs, with a membership of nearly twenty-five thousand, and Church property valued at over two and one half millions of dollars.

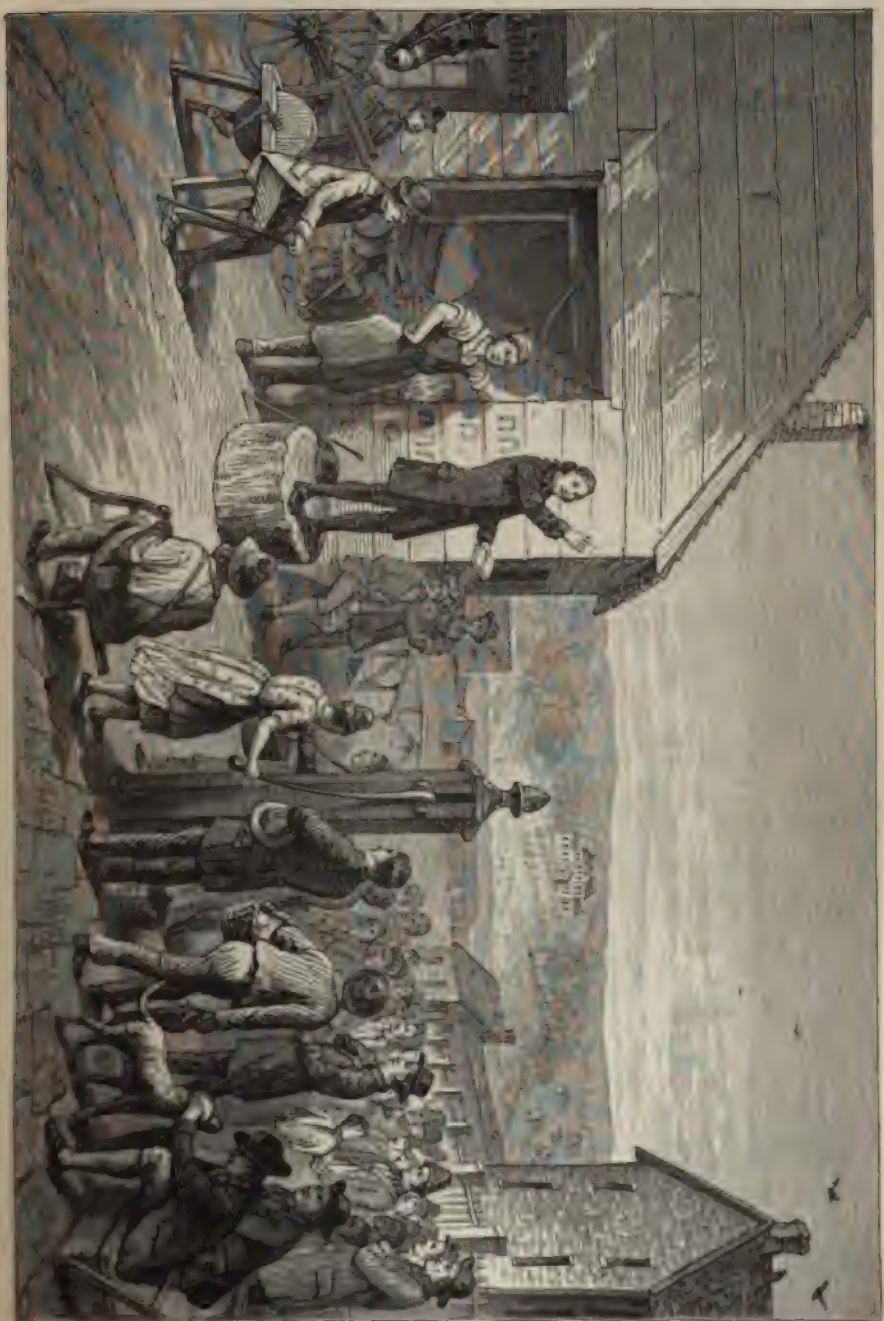
**Methodist Beginnings in Baltimore.**—The honor of preaching the first Methodist sermon in Baltimore belongs to John King, an English local preacher, who landed at Philadelphia in 1769. Finding that a large field was here opened for the Gospel, he felt moved to devote himself wholly to the work of the ministry, and at once offered his services to the Society in Philadelphia, and desired of them a license to preach. While the brethren hesitated about the matter King made an appointment to preach in the Potter's Field, and there demonstrated his ability by a rousing gospel sermon among the graves of the poor.

It was not long before he fell in with Strawbridge on his embryo circuit in Maryland, and for some length of time the two men traveled and preached right lovingly and powerfully together. Perhaps there was over much power of one sort in the sermons of Brother King, for he was the man to whom Mr. Wesley gave that solemn charge; "Scream no more at the peril of your soul. It is said of our Lord, 'He shall not cry;' the word properly means, He shall not scream."

King was accused by Mr. Wesley of being "stubborn" and "head-strong;" but these were qualities likely to be of good service amid the difficulties of a new country.

His pulpit, on the occasion of his first advent at Baltimore, was a blacksmith's block, as represented in the accompanying picture, the topography of which was studied from the location itself. The shop stood on what is now Front-street, near French-street, now renamed Bath-street, W. The foot-bridge here shown spanned the stream near Jones's Falls. The mansion in the distance is Howard Park, at that time the residence of Colonel John Eager Howard, the hero of the battle of Cowpens, in South Carolina. These grounds now comprise





— 30 —



one of the finest portions of Baltimore, containing, among other notable structures, the famous Washington Monument and the elegant Mt. Vernon Place Methodist Episcopal Church.

His next sermon was from a table, at the junction of Baltimore and Calvert-streets. His courage was tested on this occasion, for it was the militia training-day, and the drunken crowd charged upon him so effectually as to upset the table and lay him prostrate on the earth. He knew, however, that the noblest preachers of Methodism had suffered like trials in England, and he maintained his ground courageously. The commander of the troops, an Englishman, recognized



MOUNT VERNON PLACE M. E. CHURCH, BALTIMORE.

him as a fellow-countryman, and, defending him, restored order and allowed him to proceed. Victorious over the mob, he made so favorable an impression as to be invited to preach in the English Church of St. Paul's, but improved that opportunity with such fervor as to receive no repetition of the courtesy.

It is recorded that he "made the dust fly from the old velvet cushion" of the pulpit, and it is to be feared that, under the exhilarating



effects of such unwonted good fortune, he may have partly forgotten Mr. Wesley's adjuration not to scream.

As this sturdy pioneer may not be met with again in these pages, let it here be recorded that he served in the ranks of the itinerant ministry, except an enforced location during the War of the Revolution, until 1803. At his death, in North Carolina, in a ripe old age, he was believed to be the last of the Methodist preachers who had shared in the pioneer service before the Independence of America.



ST. PAUL'S METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, NEW YORK.





RICHARD BOARDMAN.



JOSEPH PILMOOR.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE ENGLISH MISSIONARIES.

**Volunteers for America.**—Neither Strawbridge, Embury, Webb, nor King, came to America for the purpose of preaching the Gospel, though this was evidently the divine purpose in sending them. Their work was owned of God, and enjoyed by the people; but there was also, in the judgment of these pioneers, a need of regularly ordained ministers. They did not conceive the "Holy Catholic Church" to be a "rope of sand;" but their hearts turned toward their spiritual father, Mr. Wesley, not only as a man who might send them ministerial re-enforcements, but, also, as the divinely appointed head of a system of churchly order.

The call of the American Methodists for preachers produced a profound impression in England. The news of the rapid progress of the work of grace among them kindled the enthusiasm of the Wesleyan itinerants, and before the Conference met at which missionaries could be duly appointed, some humbler men, imbued with the enthusiasm of the new movement, were ready to throw themselves upon the



hazards of the distant field, that they might share in the first combats and help win the first victories in the name of the Lord.

**Robert Williams.**—One of these men, whose soul was all ablaze with missionary zeal, was Robert Williams, an English local preacher, who, in view of the call from America, applied to Mr. Wesley for permission to go there and preach; which was granted, on condition that he should labor under the direction of the regular missionaries whenever they should arrive. Williams had no money for his passage, but he had a friend in Ireland named Ashton, a richer man than himself, who was just about to embark for America; he therefore hastily sold his horse to pay his debts, and with empty pockets but a full heart hastened to the ship, quite sure that his Irish friend would not leave him behind. In this he was not disappointed, and Williams landed in New York in October, 1769, nearly two months before the regular Conference missionaries arrived.

To him belongs the honor of introducing Methodism into Virginia. After some successful soul-saving work along with Strawbridge and King in Maryland, he passed on to Norfolk, Va., in 1772, where he commenced his mission by a song, a prayer, and a sermon, from the steps of the Court-house; and soon formed a little Society.

Williams was the first publisher of Mr. Wesley's books in America. In the year 1773 he was received by the first Conference, at Philadelphia; and he was the first of the English missionaries who found a grave on American soil. His death occurred near Norfolk, Va., September 26, 1775. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Asbury, in which he says: "Perhaps no man in America has been an instrument of awakening so many souls as God has awakened by him."

**Boardman and Pilmoor.**—The records of the twenty-sixth Methodist Conference, held at Leeds August 3, 1769, contain these memorable questions and answers:—

"Q. We have a pressing call from our brethren of New York (who have built a preaching house) to come over and help them. Who is willing to go?"

"Ans. Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor.

"Q. What can we do further in token of our brotherly love?"

"Ans. Let us now take a collection among ourselves.

"This was immediately done, and out of it £50 were allotted



toward the payment of their debt, and about £20 given to our brethren for their passage."

Boardman, the senior of the two, was about thirty-one years of age. He is described as vigorous, zealous, a man of deep piety and strong understanding, and of an amiable disposition. He had been six years an itinerant preacher, and was at this time mourning the recent death of his wife. His Irish brethren at Cork, when, thirteen years later, they laid him in his grave, pronounced a high eulogy upon him as an eloquent and powerful preacher; but his memory in America is precious rather on account of his loving, gentle disposition, than of any distinguished pulpit ability.

Pilmoor had been converted in his sixteenth year through the preaching of Wesley; had been educated at Wesley's Kingswood school; and had now itinerated about four years, having been admitted to the Conference in 1765. He was a man of high courage, commanding presence, much executive skill, and ready discourse. His term of service in America closed in 1774, in which year he returned to England; fell out with Mr. Wesley, who had failed to include him in the "Legal Hundred;" returned again to America; received ordination in the Protestant Episcopal Church, and preached for some years in the cities of Philadelphia and New York, where he died in 1821. If we may judge by his portrait he was a courtly gentleman, and possessed of natural abilities of a very high order.

**The Arrival of the Missionaries at Philadelphia** was a memorable event. After a rough voyage across the ocean, as they approached the Delaware Bay they encountered a most terrific gale, that strewed the coast with wrecks; a fate which for a time their ship was expected to share; but in the midst of danger, looking death in the face, Boardman says: "I found myself exceedingly happy, and rested satisfied that death would be gain. I do not remember to have had one doubt of being eternally saved should the mighty waters swallow us up."

At length, after a voyage of nine weeks, they landed at Philadelphia on the 24th of October, 1769. During part of this time the Rev. George Whitefield was also on the sea, which for the thirteenth time he was crossing to preach and die in America. All the old theological quarrels between him and Wesley had ceased long ago; and on



reaching Philadelphia, from his beloved Orphan House at Savannah, he met the Wesleyan missionaries, hailed them with joy, and gave them his blessing.

The good work thus re-enforced went on more rapidly than ever. Captain Webb, who was on the shore at Philadelphia to greet them, put into their hands a plan of the American circuit, which, with the help of himself, Williams, and King, they were to travel. New York, however, desired the full service of Boardman, while Philadelphia wished to monopolize Pilmoor, and thus at the outset the itinerant system, so vital to the success of Methodism in America, was in danger of being replaced by a settled ministry.

Shortly after his arrival Boardman, who was the senior preacher, wrote to Wesley from New York, under date of November 4, 1769, as follows:—

“There appears such a willingness in the Americans to hear the word as I never saw before. They have no preaching in some parts of the back settlements. I doubt not but an effectual door will be opened among them. O! may the Most High now give his Son the heathen for his inheritance. The number of blacks that attend the preaching affects me much.”

In April, 1771, he reports a “great awakening,” in which thirty persons had been added to the Society, “five of whom have received a clear sense of the pardoning love of God.”

Pilmoor was more abundant than Boardman in travels and adventures, if not more abundant in success. He opened his commission in Philadelphia with a sermon from the Court-house steps; filled his six months' term at St. George's Church acceptably, and then, after an exchange of parishes with the senior preacher, he took a wide range far to the south. He preached on the sidewalk in Baltimore; produced quite a sensation at Norfolk, Va.; held forth in the theater at Charleston, S. C., where he could find no other door open to him; reached Savannah at last, where he paid a visit to Whitefield's Orphan House, every-where winning his way with all classes of people.

His theater service at Charleston was interrupted in a manner which would have embarrassed a more diffident man. In the midst of his sermon what was his surprise to find himself, pulpit and all, suddenly lowered into the cellar! Some sons of Belial, who were familiar



with the mysteries of the stage, had contrived to have him placed on one of the traps in the floor, whereby he was made to disappear in spite of himself; but, nothing harmed or frightened, he sprang upon the stage, regained the table which had served him for a pulpit, and taking it in his arms he invited his hearers to adjourn with him to the adjoining yard, where there were no trap-doors to trouble him. "Come on, my friends," cried he; "we will, by the grace of God, defeat the devil this time, and not be driven by him from our work;" and when they had gathered again about him he finished his sermon in triumph in the open air.

His plain preaching on his first appearance at Norfolk had roused the opposition of the regular clergyman of that parish, who, after his departure, made an attack on the Methodists from his pulpit, taking for his text the words, "Be not righteous overmuch." This was duly reported to Pilmoor, who soon took a second occasion to preach in the town; which was then a notoriously wicked place. He gave out that he would take for his text the verse of Scripture next following the one which the parish parson had used against him, and when a great crowd had assembled, expecting something exciting, Pilmoor commenced his sermon from the words, "Be not overmuch wicked." "I have been informed," said he, "that a minister in this town has given its citizens a solemn caution against being overmuch righteous:" then, lifting his hands in amazement, he exclaimed, "And he hath given this caution in Norfolk!"

The effect of such a turning of the tables can be better imagined than described. The incident is of value as giving a glimpse of one of the men—and there were many like him—who helped to lay the foundation of the Methodist Church in America; men who were incapable of fear, who were surprised at nothing, and who did not know the meaning of defeat.

**Francis Asbury.**—And now appears a name ever memorable in the history of the Methodist Church in America; a character of the purest and strongest that is possible to mortals, and a career the most heroic that was ever witnessed under this Western sky. Like all the other great Methodists, he was first the product and then the promoter of Methodism. He grew with its growth and strengthened with its strength, till, from a good, conscientious, savingly-converted man of



sound common sense, and only fair ministerial talent, he became the John Wesley of the West; a man who, in the fullness of his strength, had no other peer as a captain of the Lord's hosts in all the English-speaking world.

A careful study of his Journals affords no evidence of superior genius. Under ordinary circumstances he would have come to no greater glory and honor than that to which many of the better class of Methodist preachers have attained; but God called him to be the



FRANCIS ASBURY.

For portrait of Asbury in his younger days see frontispiece of Part II.

Bishop of the Methodists in America, as he called Wesley to be their Bishop in Great Britain, and to both these chosen servants he gave that broad, deep culture of episcopal experience and responsibility, and that heavenly grace and power, which lifts their heads so far above the ordinary level of the Christian ministry. The pre-eminent greatness of these men was not natural, but supernatural; a further proof of the divine origin, character, and mission of that form of religion called Methodism.

But this is not the place to sum up and set forth the character of



the Pioneer Bishop: that task, at best a difficult one, can better be performed at the close than at the commencement of his career. It is always allowable in art to paint a man at his best.

At the Wesleyan Conference of 1771 volunteers for America were again called for, and of the five who offered themselves two were chosen—Francis Asbury and Richard Wright. The latter of these, after a short period of service returned to England, and disappeared from the ranks of traveling preachers; the former remained to win immortal fame.

Asbury was then one of the young preachers; he had been in the ministry but five years, and was only about twenty-six years' old. He was, however, thoroughly grounded in Methodist experience, fairly well taught in Methodist doctrine, was a thoughtful, devoted young man, who could endure hardness, and one who could learn and grow. These solid qualifications won him the appointment as Mr. Wesley's "assistant" in America; which title implied the general superintendence over all the American work, though he was by far the youngest man in it.

Asbury was the only son of poor parents. He was born in the parish of Handsworth, Staffordshire, about four miles from Birmingham, on the 20th of August, 1745. Through childhood he was faithfully taught in the things of religion by his godly mother, was brought to a saving knowledge of Christ when a youth of fifteen, was a class-leader and a local preacher at seventeen, and at twenty-one an itinerant in the regular work. His school-days were neither long nor pleasant. It was his misfortune to fall into the hands of a brutal master, of whom he had such a dread that, though he was fond enough of his book, the school was quite insufferable; he, therefore, left it when about thirteen years of age and went to learn a trade. His want of early instruction was a great affliction to him in after life, concerning which he writes in his Journal: "While I was a traveling preacher in England I was much tempted, finding myself exceedingly ignorant of almost every thing a minister of the Gospel ought to know." This deficiency he made up in part. As he traveled his great American circuits it was his custom to ride with his book open before him, and in this "irregular" manner he made himself master of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, and other essential branches of sound learning. But the



great requirements were, a conscious experience of regenerating grace, and a divine call to the ministry of the word; it being presumed that if God called a man to preach, he could preach; and that if he did his best God was willing to be responsible for the consequences. On these two points young Asbury was clear. Here is his own account thereof:—

“Soon after I entered business God sent a pious man, not a Methodist, into our neighborhood, and my mother invited him to our house; by his conversation and prayers I was awakened before I was fourteen years of age. It was now easy and pleasing to leave my company, and



HOME OF ASBURY'S CHILDHOOD.

I began to pray morning and evening. I soon left our blind priest, and went to West-Bromwick church: here I heard Ryland, Stillingfleet, Talbot, Bagnall, Mansfield, Hawes, and Venn; great names, and esteemed gospel ministers. I became very serious, reading a great deal—Whitefield's and Cennick's sermons, and every good book I could meet with. It was not long before I began to inquire of my mother who, where, and what were the Methodists; she gave me a favorable account, and directed me to a person who could take me to Wednesbury to hear them. I soon found this was not the Church—but it was better. The people were so devout—men and women kneeling down—saying *Amen*. Now, behold! they were singing



hymns—sweet sound! Why, strange to tell! the preacher had no prayer book, and yet he prayed wonderfully! What was yet more extraordinary, the man took his text, and had no sermon-book: thought I, this is wonderful indeed! It is certainly a strange way, but the best way. He talked about confidence, assurance, etc., of which all my flights and hopes fell short. I had no deep convictions, nor had I committed any deep known sins. At one sermon, some time after, my companion was powerfully wrought on: I was exceedingly grieved that I could not weep like him; yet I knew myself to be in a state of unbelief.

“On a certain time when we were praying, I believe the Lord pardoned my sins, and justified my soul; but my companions reasoned me out of this belief. I gave up my confidence, and that for months; yet I was happy; free from guilt and fear, and had power over sin, and felt great inward joy.

“After this we met for reading and prayer, and had large and good meetings, and were much persecuted, until the persons at whose houses we held them were afraid, and they were discontinued. I then held meetings frequently at my father’s house, exhorting the people there, as also at Sutton-Cofields, and several souls professed to find peace through my labors. I met class awhile at Bromwick Heath, and met in band at Wednesbury. I had preached some months before I publicly appeared in the Methodist meeting-houses; when my labors became more public and extensive, some were amazed, not knowing how I had exercised elsewhere.

“My mother used to take me with her to a female meeting, which she conducted once a fortnight, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures, and giving out hymns. After I had been thus employed as a clerk for some time, the good sisters thought Frank might venture a word of exhortation. So, after reading, I would venture to expound and paraphrase a little on the portion read. Thus began my gospel efforts, when a lad of sixteen or seventeen; and now I would rather have a section or chapter for a text than a single verse or part of a verse. When the Society called me forth from obscurity my performance in public surpassed all expectation. But they knew not that the stripling had been exercising his gifts in his mother’s prayer-meeting.

“Behold me now a local preacher; the humble and willing servant of



any and of every preacher that called on me by night or by day ; being ready, with hasty steps, to go far and wide to do good ; visiting Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and indeed almost every place within my reach for the sake of precious souls ; preaching, generally, three, four, and five times a week, and at the same time pursuing my calling. I think when I was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of age I gave myself up to God and his work, after acting as a local preacher near the space of five years.



ELIZABETH ASBURY—THE MOTHER OF BISHOP ASBURY.

"Some time after I had obtained a clear witness of my acceptance with God, the Lord showed me, in the heat of youth and youthful blood, the evil of my heart: for a short time I enjoyed, as I thought, the pure and perfect love of God ; but this happy frame did not long continue, although, at seasons, I was greatly blessed.

"On the 7th of August, 1771, the Conference began at Bristol, in England. Before this, I had felt for half a year strong intimations in my mind that I should visit America ; which I laid before



the Lord, being unwilling to do my own will, or to run before I was sent. During this time my trials were very great, which the Lord, I believe, permitted to prove and try me, in order to prepare me for future usefulness. At the Conference it was proposed that some preachers should go over to the American continent. I spoke my mind, and made an offer of myself. It was accepted by Mr. Wesley and others, who judged I had a call. From Bristol I went home to acquaint my parents with my great undertaking, which I opened in as gentle a manner as possible. Though it was grievous to flesh and blood, they consented to let me go. My mother is one of the tenderest parents in the world: but I believe she was blest in the present instance with divine assistance to part with me.

"I returned to Bristol in the latter end of August, where Richard Wright was waiting for me, to sail in a few days for Philadelphia. When I came to Bristol I had not one penny of money; but the Lord soon opened the hearts of friends, who supplied me with clothes, and ten pounds. Thus I found by experience that the Lord will provide for those who trust in him."

It was in Asbury's native county of Staffordshire that some of the most violent persecutions of the Methodists occurred. The parish of Handsworth was in "the Black Country," of infamous memory, and Asbury and his mother had some experience of mobs and riots, though the worst of these occurred at an earlier date. This was the country of which Charles Wesley writes, that in riding through it one might distinguish the houses of the Methodists by the marks of violence upon them; and where, on one occasion, John Wesley was clubbed almost to death. "The mob," he says, "reigned for nearly a week, and the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea." It was at the risk of the repetition of these horrors that young Asbury commenced his work as a local preacher; an experience well calculated to save him from "softness," that special abomination of John Wesley.

The last sermon of Francis Asbury in England was on the text, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed." Psa. lxi, 2. And this was the plan of it:—

"I. Where should the missionary herald be? The end of the earth.

"II. And whose heart should be overwhelmed, *swallowed up*, if



not the heart of him to whom a dispensation of the Gospel is committed?

"III. And whence should he look for succor but to Christ, the Rock that is higher than he?

"IV. How should he obtain that succor but by constant, fervent prayer?"

In referring many years afterward to this farewell discourse, Asbury said:—

"Ah! often has my heart been overwhelmed during my forty years' pilgrimage in America. And if I had been a man of tears I might have wept my life away; but Christ has been a hiding-place, a covert from the stormy blast; yea, he has been the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." "Here," says the narrator to whom he was speaking, "the Bishop's voice trembled a little—his lip quivered—and the tears started from his half-closed, clear blue eye. But presently he was gay; 'For,' said he, 'if I were not sometimes to be gay with my friends I should have died in gloom long ago.'"

The arrival of Messrs. Asbury and Wright at Philadelphia, October 7, 1771, was hailed with joy. "The people," says Mr. Asbury, "looked on us with pleasure, hardly knowing how to show their love sufficiently, bidding us welcome with fervent affection, and receiving us as angels of God."

**Asbury's Views on Itinerancy.**—There is something fanciful in the saying of Wesley, "The world is my parish." He did, indeed, cross the Atlantic in his early life to preach to the Indians under the auspices of General Oglethorpe, in the Colony of Georgia, but his stay was a brief one, and after his real life work commenced he never left the British Islands; though the sturdy claim of his *right* to go every-where, and to preach every-where, was a most astounding doctrine to the localized Church dignitaries of those days. There is nothing fanciful, however, in saying of Asbury that he had the new world for his parish, for he made it into one great circuit; and traveled it in true itinerant fashion for over thirty years: preaching incessantly, day and night, week days and Sundays; stopping not for storms, without shelter; for forests, without roads; for rivers, without bridges; or for a purse, without money.



When he landed at Philadelphia in 1771 there were about 600 Methodists scattered over his parish; with 10 preachers, including Embury and the brave old soldier, Captain Webb. His warm reception gave him fresh vigor, and he plunged at once into the work; first of all, like a skillful general, starting out to reconnoiter his position and view the fields of his future triumphs.

His first affliction was the habit of the preachers of going into winter quarters in the snug city churches. "At present I am dissatisfied," says he. "I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way. I am in trouble, and more trouble is at hand, for I am determined to make a stand against all partiality. I have nothing to seek but the glory of God; nothing to fear but his displeasure. I am come over with an upright intention, and through the grace of God I will make it appear; and I am determined that no man shall bias me with soft words and fair speeches; nor will I ever fear (the Lord helping me) the face of man, or know any man after the flesh, if I beg my bread from door to door; but whomsoever I please or displease I will be faithful to God, to the people, and to my own soul."

Asbury was as good as his word. He organized a circuit embracing a large region around New York, and kept the Gospel sounding through it all winter; preaching in log-cabins, in court-houses, in prisons, and even at public executions, though but rarely in churches; for, including Strawbridge's log hut, there were as yet only three Methodist preaching houses in all North America.

Beyond all doubt this young Englishman, by his sagacious management of this very question, saved the cause of Methodism in America from early and inglorious death. The itinerant feature of its ministry was already disappearing, and if that had been lost the whole movement must have failed. Colonial Methodism and a settled ministry were entirely incompatible. Asbury saw this, and contended for a movable force of preachers; the only order that could find the scattered sheep in the wilderness, or keep pace with the restless pioneers. His theory was, that a minister should be rooted and grounded in love; settled and established in sound doctrine; but that in every thing else he should be as movable as a soldier on the land or a sailor on the sea.



No great captain has been fond of long encampments. So with the great leaders of Methodism. They prized the itinerancy, not only as an economy which afforded a variety of gifts to the different Societies, the most of which would have languished under the exclusive care of any one of the average preachers, but also a kind of military drill to the preachers themselves. It kept them energetic by keeping them in motion. For a time the length of a preacher's stay on one circuit was only six months; it has now been lengthened to thirty-six; but it is to be hoped that the Church will forbid further progress in that direction, except in cases of evident emergency; for if the plan of permanent, or even indefinite, pastorates should ever largely prevail, then farewell to the spirit, the unity, and the power of Methodism.

**Rankin and Shadford.**—In 1772 Captain Webb returned from England with another re-enforcement. He had made a very deep impression upon Mr. Wesley and the Conference at large; though Charles Wesley thought him a fanatic because of his glowing description of the American field. Webb demanded two of their chief men; Christopher Hopper and Joseph Benson; but as these could not be spared, Thomas Rankin and George Shadford were appointed in their stead.

Rankin was a Scotchman; one of the few men of that nation who have found their way into the itinerant ranks; and one of the commanding men of the Methodist fraternity. He had been awakened by hearing the preaching of some of John Haime's Methodist troopers who were converted and called out at the time of the great revival among the army in Flanders, in 1745, and who returned to preach a free salvation in Presbyterian Scotland. He had listened to the preaching of Whitefield, Wesley, and Mather; had stood by the latter in showers of dirt, stones, rotten eggs, etc.: arguments with which the doctrines of that class of preachers were often controverted in those days: but in spite of them he came into the enjoyment of saving grace, and in 1761 joined Wesley's band of itinerants; rode a circuit with sturdy John Nelson; became a notable revival preacher; showed the points of a strict disciplinarian, and after eleven years of hard work was appointed by Wesley in 1772 to the head of all the Methodist ministry in America.

At first Asbury, who was thus superseded, submitted with good



grace, as a younger man to an elder, but presently there began to be evidences of a good deal of human nature in these "old-fashioned Methodists," of very much the same quality as that which sometimes causes friction with the modern machinery of the itinerant work. Rankin was disappointed in not finding more and larger Societies in America, as well as greatly scandalized at their want of form and order. Whether, on the other hand, the young bishop in embryo did not relish the same treatment from Rankin as he was inclined to give to his



THOMAS RANKIN.

own subordinates, or whether the Scotchman's notions of the powers of an "assistant" exceeded his knowledge of the situation, does not at this distance plainly appear. But the unfavorable opinions of Asbury which Rankin wrote to Mr. Wesley, and which led to Asbury's recall to England, were afterward shown to be erroneous, and the young pioneer was reinstated in the favor of his chief, whose letter of recall was, fortunately, never received. Of Rankin Mr. Asbury makes this significant note: "Though he will not be admired as a preacher, yet as a disciplinarian he will fill his place."



**George Shadford** was a man after Captain Webb's own heart. Like him, Shadford had been a soldier ; like him, he was "full of life and fire;" a successful revival preacher; a genial, not to say jovial, companion; and capable of comprehending and revelling in the wild, wide, adventurous work which opened before him in the new world. If these two men, Webb and Shadford, could have been converted to the Continental Congress instead of holding steadfast in their loyalty to their king, they might have been two princes in our Israel; but this was hardly to be expected of two old red-coats; and thus on the breaking out of the war, which soon followed, they were lost to America: and what was her loss was by no means their gain.

During his term of service in the English militia Shadford had been deeply convicted of sin at a Methodist meeting in Gainsborough, of which experience he says: "I was tried, cast, and condemned. I then made a vow to Almighty God, that if he would spare me until that time twelvemonth, (at which time I should be at liberty from the militia, and intended to return home,) I would then serve him. So I resolved to venture another year in the old way, damned or saved. O what a mercy that I am not in hell! that God did not take me at my word and cut me off immediately!

"In Kent the Lord arrested me again with strong convictions, so that I was obliged to leave my comrades at noonday, and, running up into my chamber, I threw myself upon my knees and wept bitterly. I thought, 'Sin, cursed sin, will be my ruin!' I was ready to tear the very hair from my head, thinking I must perish at last, and that my sins would sink me lower than the grave. . . . Wherever I traveled, I found the Methodists were spoken against by wicked and ungodly persons of every denomination; and the more I looked into the Bible the more I was convinced that they were the people of God."

On his release from the militia service he was received at home with great rejoicings, and a ball was given in his honor by the young people, with whom he was a great favorite; but on his way home from the dance his old convictions of sin again overwhelmed him, and he found no rest till he resolved to perform his vow.

Of the vivid experiences of his soul when light first broke in upon it, he gives the following account:—

"My sins pressed me sore, and the hand of the Lord was very heavy



upon me. Thus I continued until Sunday, May 5, 1762; coming out of church, the farmer that received the preachers told me a stranger was to preach at his house. I went to hear him, and was pleased and much affected. He gave notice that he would preach again in the evening. In the meantime I persuaded as many neighbors as I could to go. We had a full house, and several were greatly affected while he published his crucified Master. Toward the latter part of the sermon I trembled, I shook, I wept. I thought, 'I cannot stand it; I shall fall down amid all this people.' O how gladly would I have been alone to weep! for I was tempted with shame. I stood guilty and condemned. Like the publican in the temple, I cried out, (so that others heard,) being pierced to the heart with the sword of the Spirit, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' No sooner had I expressed these words than by the eye of faith (not with my bodily eyes) I saw Christ, my Advocate, at the right hand of God, making intercession for me. I believed he loved me, and gave himself for me.

"In an instant the Lord filled my soul with divine love, as quick as lightning. Immediately my eyes flowed with tears, and my heart with love. Tears of joy and sorrow ran down my cheeks. O what sweet distress was this! I seemed as if I could weep my life away in tears of love. I sat down in a chair, for I could stand no longer, and these words ran through my mind twenty times over: 'Marvelous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.' As I walked home along the streets I seemed to be in paradise. When I read my Bible, it seemed an entirely new book. When I meditated on God and Christ, angels or spirits—when I considered good or bad men, any or all the creatures that surrounded me—everything appeared new, and stood in a new relation to me. I was in Christ a new creature; old things were done away, and all things become new. I lay down at night in peace, with a thankful heart, because the Lord hath redeemed me, and given me peace with God and all mankind.

"But no sooner had I peace within than the devil and wicked men began to roar without, and pour forth floods of lies and scandal in order to drown the young child. And no marvel, for the devil had lost one of the main pillars of his kingdom in that parish; and therefore he did not leave a stone unturned, that he might cast odium upon the work of God in that place. But none of these things moved me, for



I was happy in my God; clothed with the sun, and the moon under my feet; raised up, and made to sit in heavenly, holy, happy places in Christ Jesus. In a fortnight after I joined the Society."

He soon began to exhort his friends, neighbors, and whosoever came in his way, to "flee from the wrath to come." After one of his exhortations he returned home and found his father reading in the Psalms of David. "I saw," he says, "the tears running down his cheeks; yet there appeared a joy in his countenance. I said, 'Pray, father, what now? What now? What is the matter?'

"He instantly answered, 'I have found Christ; I have found Christ at last. Upward of sixty years I have lived without him in the world in sin and ignorance. I have been all the day idle and entered not into his vineyard till the eleventh hour. O how merciful was he to spare me, and hire me at last! He hath set my soul at liberty. O praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!' I left him rejoicing in God his Saviour, and retired to praise God for answering my prayers."

His mother next found peace in believing; then his sister; and the little Society of the town grew vigorous by his humble labors, in a short time increasing from the original twelve to forty.

Shadford now became a local preacher, and when Wesley met him, in 1768, he summoned him into the itinerant field. His first circuit was in Cornwall, the next in Kent, and the next in Norwich. In 1772, hearing Webb's appeal for America in the Leeds Conference, his spirit was stirred within him to go; and Rankin, who was first appointed, chose him for his companion. Both of them, however, continued their English work till the spring of 1773, when, on Good Friday, April 9th, they set sail, and on the first of June anchored in Delaware Bay.

Previous to their departure Wesley wrote Shadford a cheery and affectionate letter, saying, among other things: "Dear George, the time has arrived for you to embark for America. You must go down to Bristol, where you will meet with Thomas Rankin, Captain Webb, and his wife. I let you loose, George, on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can."

When he reached the wharf where the ship lay he was reminded of a dream which he had six years before, and in which a written



message seemed sent him from heaven, requiring him "to go and preach the Gospel in a foreign land." "I thought," says he, "I was conveyed to the place where the ship lay, in which I was to embark in an instant. The wharf and ship appeared as plain to me as if I were awake. I replied, 'Lord, I am willing to go in thy name, but I am afraid a people of different nations and languages will not understand me.' An answer to this was given: 'Fear not, for I am with thee.' I awoke, awfully impressed with the presence of God, and



FIRST METHODIST CONFERENCE.

was really full of divine love; and a relish of it remained upon my spirit for many days. I could not tell what this meant, and revolved these things in my mind for a long time. But when I came to Peel, and saw the ship and wharf, then all came fresh to my mind." Shadford made full proof of his ministry during his stay, and, as will duly appear, was the last of the English preachers to abandon the American work.

**The First Methodist Conference in America** was held in what there was of St. George's Church in Philadelphia—little



else but four rough walls and a roof. It began on Wednesday, the 14th of July, 1773, and continued two days. Rankin, of course, was the presiding officer of the little assembly, which numbered ten men all told, including Messrs. Boardman and Pilmoor, who were just about to return to England.

Asbury was detained on his New York Circuit, and did not appear till the second day of the session. He was the tenth member, making the number the same as in Wesley's first English Conference, held twenty-nine years before. The members of this first American Conference were all Europeans. They were: Thomas Rankin, Richard Boardman, Joseph Pilmoor, Francis Asbury, Richard Wright, George Shadford, Thomas Webb, John King, Abraham Whitworth, and Joseph Yearbry, who had accompanied Rankin and Shadford from England.\*

Here are the minutes of this first Conference in full; the Wesleyan form of question and answer being faithfully retained:—

The following queries were proposed to every preacher:—

1. Ought not the authority of Mr. Wesley and that Conference to extend to the preachers and people in America, as well as in Great Britain and Ireland?

*Ans.* Yes.

2. Ought not the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, as contained in the Minutes, to be the sole rule of our conduct, who labor in the connection with Mr. Wesley, in America?

*Ans.* Yes.

3. If so, does it not follow, that if any preachers deviate from the Minutes,† we can have no fellowship with them till they change their conduct?

*Ans.* Yes.

The following rules were agreed to by all the preachers present:—

1. Every preacher who acts in connection with Mr. Wesley and the brethren who labor in America is strictly to avoid administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper.

2. All the people among whom we labor to be earnestly exhorted to attend the Church, and to receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner to press the people in Maryland and Virginia to the observance of this minute.

3. No person or persons to be admitted into our love-feasts oftener than twice

\* STEVENS'S "History of Methodism."

† The Minutes of Mr. Wesley's Conferences in England were the only rules for Church government. The decisions recorded therein were held as law by the Methodists on both sides of the ocean.



or thrice, unless they become members; and none to be admitted to the Society meetings more than thrice.

4. None of the preachers in America to reprint any of Mr. Wesley's books, without his authority (when it can be gotten) and the consent of their brethren.

5. Robert Williams to sell the books he has already printed, but to print no more, unless under the above restrictions.

6. Every preacher who acts as an assistant, to send an account of the work once in six months to the general assistant.

*Ques. 1. How are the preachers stationed?*

*Ans.* New York, Thomas Rankin, } to change in four months.  
Philadelphia, George Shadford, }

New Jersey, John King, William Watters.

Baltimore, { Francis Asbury, Robert Strawbridge, Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Yearbry.

Norfolk, Richard Wright.

Petersburgh, Robert Williams.

*Ques. 2. What numbers are there in the Society?*

*Ans.* New York, 180; Philadelphia, 180; New Jersey, 200; Maryland, 500; Virginia, 100; (preachers 10.) Total, 1,170.

Alas! even at the first meeting of these "old-fashioned Methodists," there was a contention among them. The irrepressible Brother Strawbridge had violated Mr. Wesley's rule and taken upon himself to celebrate the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, and the first three questions and answers were doubtless aimed at him. They were, however, ineffectual, as will presently appear, and out of this very question arose one of the storms which shook early American Methodism to its center.

**Asbury "Settles" the Societies in Baltimore.**—At this first Conference Asbury was appointed to the Baltimore Circuit, which embraced all the Societies in Maryland, and included nearly one half of all the Methodists then in America. These Societies had been formed in a very unmethodical manner; indeed, the whole body was thought, by Rankin and Asbury, to be sadly wanting in order and discipline; and one of the first cares of the new preacher was to organize the Societies into classes, one of men and one of women, on the true Wesleyan plan.

It is worthy of note that Asbury had great difficulty in finding leaders for the classes of men, while there was no lack of female talent to lead the classes of women.



It was now needful to house the Baltimore Society, as it had outgrown the hospitable dwellings at which it had hitherto been entertained; and another sail-loft, as in New York, was fixed upon, which place, at the corner of Mills and Block streets, was generously allowed them for their meetings free of charge. Though a sizable room, it was soon filled to overflowing; and so wide was the spread and so rapid the progress of the good work, that it was determined to build two new houses of worship, about a mile and a half apart.

**Strawberry Alley.**—The first of these to be commenced, though the last to be finished, as well as the last original Methodist



INTERIOR OF OLD STRAWBERRY ALLEY M. E. CHURCH.

structure now remaining in the city, was the church in Strawberry Alley. It was begun in November, 1773, under the over-sight of Mr. Asbury, assisted by Jesse Hollingsworth and others, but was somewhat delayed in its completion. It was a large, low brick building, with an old-fashioned tub pulpit, and a "sounding board" above it; a contrivance well adapted to assist the feeble reading of manuscript in a lofty, spacious edifice, but scarcely needed in a house about 40 by 60, with low, plain ceilings, wherein was to be given that powerful voicing of the Gospel which characterized the early Methodist ministry. The



place was as plain as Methodism itself, its only ornament being a wide half circle of blue, painted on the wall behind the pulpit, on which, in letters of gold, appeared the words, THOU GOD SEEST ME.

This structure, which has since been modified within and without, is now used as a society hall, in which colored lodges, divisions, councils, etc., hold their respective meetings. The narrow, dirty alley on which it stands is now called Dallas-street.

**Lovely Lane.**—This edifice, memorable as the place of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the "Christmas Conference" in 1784, was located and erected in 1774, by William Moore and Philip Rogers, two of the Baltimore converts under Asbury's ministry; both of whom had been far from God, and one of them notoriously wicked. Such a transition from sin to holiness, followed by such enterprising benevolence, was proof that God was with his itinerant gossellers, and that the work of grace wrought under their ministry was of a genuine and substantial sort. This building has disappeared, but its succession of sanctity has been kept up, first by the old Light-street Church, and its famous parsonage, (of which more in its place,) and afterward by the present First Methodist Episcopal Church, on Charles-street. Even the lovely name of the lane has vanished, and it is now called German-street.

**The Last Missionaries from England** appointed by Mr. Wesley, were James Dempster and Richard Rodda. They were accompanied by William Glendenning, who came as a volunteer. Dempster was a Scotchman of good education and a man of power. He was appointed to New York, in 1775; but ill health, the excitements of the coming war, a latent attachment to the Church of Scotland, and last, but not least, matrimony, all combined to make his position an unhappy one, and after only about a year of service in the American work, added to his ten years of itinerancy in England, he took his departure to the Presbyterians; taking with him also, by special declaration, all his Methodist theology, of which he made good use among that people until his death, in 1804.

Rodda, like Wesley, labored under the impression that loyalty to King George was an essential part of an Englishman's religion. The rebellious spirit of the colonists aroused his wrath, and in his efforts to withstand the manifest destiny of America he was accused



of circulating over his district, in Delaware, the Royal Proclamation against the rebels; on which account he was obliged to fly for his life. He took refuge on board a British man-of-war, which had been sent out to chastise these undutiful subjects; and at length was carried to England.

Glendenning followed the example of Dempster, and left the denomination; Pilmoor and Boardman had departed in 1772; and now, with the difficulties of their situation daily increasing, which in a large measure were the results of the indiscretions of Rodda and Rankin, the country became too hot for the English Methodists; and, following the example of their neighbors, the Episcopal clergy, they every one, with the exception of Asbury, forsook the little Church in the wilderness and returned to the mother country.

#### **George Whitefield: Death of in America in 1770.**

—The thirteenth and last voyage of this tireless traveler and matchless master of the art of preaching, was in the autumn of 1769; the same gale driving him across the ocean which nearly wrecked the first Wesleyan missionaries, Boardman and Pilmoor, in the Delaware Bay. For more than thirty years he had carried two great countries in his heart, crossing the sea between them again and again at the call of his Savannah Orphanage on the one side, and of his London congregation at the Tottenham Court Road Tabernacle, on the other.

When in England he must needs range about with the wildest freedom, preaching incessantly to vast congregations, usually in the open air; enduring persecution with cheerfulness; emerging from a mob with a hallelujah! swaying the multitudes with his eloquence, and leaving them to make the most of it when he was gone. Unlike his friend, Wesley, he possessed no genius for organization, and had it not been for the munificence and sagacity of the Countess of Huntingdon, the lady "Bishop of Calvinistic Methodism," there would have remained as little in the three kingdoms as in the thirteen colonies to remind them that such a man as Whitefield ever lived. Within a short distance of Wesley's Old Foundry stood Whitefield's Tabernacle, which, in his new-found zeal for the doctrine of predestination, he caused to be erected as a fortress from which, as a base of operations, he might oppose the spread of the Arminian theology. Alas! that so



glorious a soul should have wasted so much time and strength on such an ill-fated cause.

He who was the first to learn the blessed mystery of regeneration,



*Your Brother Sinner*  
*Whitefield*

and the first to take the Gospel out from its Gothic prisons in the State Churches, and give it to the multitudes under the open sky, was at length so fettered by theories, and so shut in from fellowship with



the Christian communions in Great Britain, that, although attended by admiring multitudes, he remained almost alone. It was not possible that a great religious community should, at that late day, grow up in the shadow of the Geneva-theology. Thus while the Wesleyan movement spread and flourished, the leader of Calvinistic Methodism, after thirty years of labor and controversy, had but a very diminutive body of adherents.

But in America Whitefield's star shone pre-eminent. His theology was then the doctrine of New England; he was cordially admired and loved by the Orthodox, and as cordially hated by the Heterodox, all the way from Savannah to Portland. Until his last visit there were no Wesleyans on all the continent to vex him; and thus again and again he swept along the shores of the New World on wave after wave of power and glory. But as in England, so in America, he built the most of his castles in the air. His art was like that of the frost-work on a window pane or the coloring in the clouds of sunset skies.

What then? Does not God employ himself in painting such pictures and tracing such lines as well as in hardening the rocks and piling up mountains? Why, then, shall not this angel of eloquence flying through the midst of heaven be hailed as a messenger of the Lord, even as if his thoughts had taken on the solid forms of history, and his work had been the center around which had crystallized ten thousand Churches with their millions of worshiping souls?

**Whitefield's Slaves.**—It is not according to the economy of nature or grace to bestow all gifts in one direction; and Whitefield was no exception to this rule: but who would expect to find this Englishman, this pattern of self-forgetful heroism, this father of orphans, this brother of prisoners and paupers, an open advocate of negro slavery, and an actual owner of property in the form of men, women, and children? But such is plainly the case!

In the year 1764 Whitefield informed the Council of Georgia that he had already expended £12,000 upon his Orphan House; that he was now anxious to attach to it a college, to which the respectable inhabitants of Georgia, Virginia, and the West Indies might send their sons to be educated; that, in order to accomplish his purpose, he was prepared to lay out a considerable sum of money "*in purchasing a large number of negroes*" for the cultivation of the lands, and for the



"future support of a president, professors, and tutors;" and that he now asked the Council to grant him, in trust, for the purpose aforesaid, two thousand acres of land on the north fork of Turtle River. The Council acceded to his request at once. Whitefield then memorialized the King to grant a charter for the founding of the college; stating, that if this were done he was "ready to give up his present trust, and make a free gift of all lands, negroes, goods, and chattels which he now possessed in Georgia for the support of the proposed institution, to be called by the name of Bethesda College, in Georgia." A long official correspondence followed. The Government were not unwilling to grant a charter, but they insisted that the president of the college should be a minister of the Church of England, and that there should be a daily use of the Church liturgy. These conditions he declined; and hence the charter was refused. In place of the "college," therefore, Whitefield added to his Georgia Orphan House a public academy, for whose accommodation he enlarged the structure by two wings, each one hundred and fifty feet in length; obtained a grant of 3,800 acres of land from the Georgia Council, and purchased seventy-five negroes to cultivate it.

The cost of this improvement, (?) including the price of the slaves, was £15,404 2s. 5½d.; of which £4,471 0s. 6½d. was collected in England, and £3,229 3s. 3½d. was set down as "the Rev. Mr. Whitefield's benefactions, being the sums expended more than received." The whole number of orphans maintained and educated in this institution during the thirty years of its existence was 183; 140 boys and 43 girls, besides a considerable number of other children who received occasional instruction. At the date above mentioned, February, 1770, there were 15 boys and 1 girl in the establishment, and a working force of 50 negro slaves.

In his will Whitefield transferred the whole of this property, slaves and all, in trust, to his noble patroness Lady Huntingdon, who found no small difficulty in managing such a bequest; but about three years after the death of its founder the main building was struck by lightning and burned, to the great relief of the Countess; who wrote concerning the event, "I could never wish it for one moment to be otherwise, believing the Lord removed it out of our way."

That the slavery which existed on Whitefield's charity plantation



was not the result of a stress of affairs brought on by the increase of its land grants and the cost of enlarging its halls, appears from a letter written by him nearly twenty years before, in which he gives thanks to God that, after long prohibition by the terms of its charter, the Colony of Georgia is at last permitted to enjoy the benefits of negro slavery.

The following is the letter in full, as reproduced by Tyerman, from the second volume of Whitefield's Works:—

“BRISTOL, *March 22, 1751.*

“REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR:—Thanks be to God, that the time for favoring the Colony of Georgia seems to be come. Now is the season for us to exert our utmost for the good of the poor Ethiopians. We are told that even they are soon to stretch out their hands to God; and who knows but their being settled in Georgia may be overruled for this great end? As for the lawfulness of keeping slaves I have no doubt, since I hear of some that were bought with Abraham's money, and some that were born in his house. I also cannot help thinking that some of those servants mentioned by the apostles in their epistles were, or had been, slaves. It is plain that the Gibeonites were doomed to perpetual slavery; and, though liberty is a sweet thing to such as are born free, yet to those who never knew the sweets of it, slavery, perhaps, may not be so irksome. However this be, it is plain to a demonstration, that hot countries cannot be cultivated without negroes. What a flourishing country might Georgia have been had the use of them been permitted years ago! How many white people have been destroyed for want of them, and how many thousands of pounds spent to no purpose at all! Though it is true that they are brought in a wrong way from their own country, and it is a trade not to be approved of, yet as it will be carried on whether we will or not, I should think myself highly favored if I could purchase a good number of them in order to make their lives comfortable, and lay a foundation for breeding up their posterity in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I had no hand in bringing them into Georgia, though my judgment was for it, and I was strongly importuned thereto; yet, I would not have a negro upon my plantation till the use of them was publicly allowed by the colony. Now this is done, let us diligently improve the present opportunity for their instruction. It rejoiced my soul to hear that one of my poor negroes in Carolina was made a brother in Christ. How know we but we may have many such instances in Georgia? I trust many of them will be brought to Jesus, and this consideration, as to us, swallows up all temporal inconvenience whatsoever.

“I am, etc.,

“GEORGE WHITEFIELD.”

Contrasted with Mr. Wesley's famous definition of slavery as the “sum of all villainies,” this letter of his old pupil in the Holy Club is



somewhat startling, and how to account for it is a question for the philosophers. How much of this wide divergence in the views of these two excellent men on this particular subject was the result of differences in their mental constitutions, how much was the result of surrounding circumstances, and how much of it came of their respective views of the divine government, might be as profitable topics for discussion as many others to which profound metaphysicians have devoted their time. It surely could be no very difficult thing for a man to persuade himself that God, for his sovereign pleasure, had appointed some small portion of the human race to endure a brief lifetime of slavery, who had already come to believe that, for the same reason, he had predestined the majority of the race to the pains of eternal hell. Profitable iniquity is never at a loss for logic: it can even frame a theology to suit its purpose. On the other hand, there have been multitudes of believers in the freest idea of grace who thought it was not harm to make slaves of their African brethren and sisters.

Did not Whitefield hold his slaves avowedly for the glory of God as well as for their own highest good?

Alas! then, for the reliability of the human conscience as an ultimate authority in ethics and religion.

**The Quadruple Alliance.**—Before Whitefield's last voyage across the Atlantic he had re-established friendly relations with his old friends, the Wesleys; and the doctrinal zeal of Lady Huntingdon had so far cooled down, that, after having expelled every body from her Trevecca College who was guilty of believing in Wesleyan theology, she at length admitted Mr. Wesley himself to the pulpits of her chapels, and thus a cordial peace was reached after years of useless war. This reunion of old friends, called by Charles Wesley "the Quadruple Alliance," was made in the year 1767, and lasted till Whitefield's death, after which the holy war was resumed by Mr. Whitefield's friends in the interest of the doctrines he represented with even more savageness than before.

During this cessation of hostilities it was arranged between the two great Methodist leaders that he who survived the other should preach his funeral sermon; and as a *codicil* to his last will and testament Whitefield inserted the following bequest:—



I also leave a mourning ring to my honored and dear friends and disinterested fellow-laborers, the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them in heart and Christian affection, notwithstanding our differences in judgment about some particular points of doctrine. Grace be with all them, of whatever denomination, that love our Lord Jesus, our common Lord, in sincerity.

As further proof of his fraternal love he told his congregation at the Tottenham Court Road Chapel that he desired to be buried therein, and that he wished the Wesley brothers might lie beside him. "We will," said he, "all lie together. You refuse them entrance here while living: they can do you no harm when they are dead." Whitefield's wish was not realized; but he lived long enough to welcome John Wesley to his pulpit, over which, for various reasons, chief of which was his frequent and extended absence, he had very little control.

For many years Whitefield's health had been feeble, but he persisted in preaching, in which he took the most intense delight. His spirits were lively, often jubilant, in spite of increasing infirmities; and his letters abound with expressions of joy and praise.

His last sermon was preached at Exeter, N. H., the easternmost point of his tour in the autumn of 1770.

"You are more fit to go to bed than to preach," said one of his friends who noticed his extreme exhaustion.

"True, sir," replied Whitefield. Then, clasping his hands, he looked up to heaven, and added: "Lord Jesus, I am weary in thy work, but not of it."

The subject of this discourse, which was two hours in length—the mighty effort of a dying man—was "Faith and Works." He labored heavily at first, but at length his soul roused up the last forces of his body, and his voice rang out with its old power. "Works! works!" cried he, "a man get to heaven by works! I would as soon think of climbing to the moon on a rope of sand."

From Exeter he hastened southward to Newburyport, Mass., fainting with exhaustion and struggling with the asthma. His coming having been noised abroad, a crowd gathered in front of the parsonage and pressed into its hall, eager to hear even a word from the most eloquent preacher on earth; but he was too ill to preach, and after a light supper, took his candle to go to his bed-chamber. The sight of



the eager throng moved him, and he stopped on the stairs, holding the candle in his hand, and spoke to them till the candle burned out in its socket.

The next morning God had taken him. His death occurred at six o'clock on Sunday morning, September 30, 1770, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. He died of asthma, and of doing the work of two or three men for a period of nearly thirty years.

In accordance with his request a tomb was made for him under-



WHITEFIELD'S LAST EXHORTATION.

neath the pulpit of the church at Newburyport, and on the following Tuesday loving hands laid his mortal part therein, in the presence of weeping thousands who, though he was of another country, mourned him not as a stranger, but as a brother of their own blood.

In Georgia his funeral was celebrated with the utmost love and reverence. In his London Tabernacle there were most impressive



memorial services, chief among which was the funeral sermon, by Wesley, from the text, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." It was in this sermon, as already mentioned, in Part I of this volume, that Wesley gave such mortal offense to Toplady and Rowland Hill.

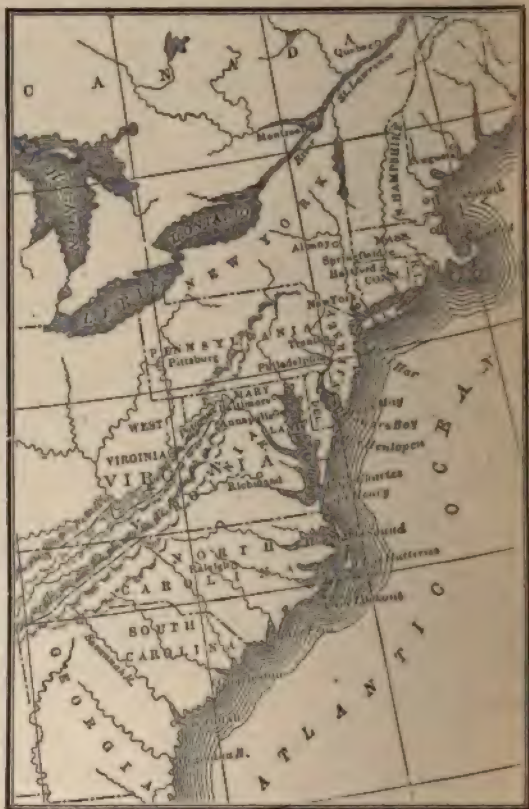
Perhaps no better summing up of the character and career of this marvelous man can be given than in the words by which another great evangelist once described himself: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord." Wanting those more substantial qualities of mind without which a man may not be a great leader, he possessed those special gifts which fitted him to be a John the Baptist over again; just such a man as it is easy to imagine John the Baptist would have been if he had appeared seventeen hundred years later. Whitefield was, indeed, a voice. His very life was to speak. It was his meat and drink to preach the gospel of regeneration through faith in the Son of God, and for this particular work God endowed him as he has rarely ever endowed a man in ancient or modern times. In learning he did not particularly excel; in business he would have been a failure if that business had been any thing else than building a house for orphans in a foreign country, which furnished him a basis for continual voicing to vast multitudes of people the duty of practical benevolence, and a reason for ranging over land and sea, preaching to all England and America. The Orphan House has passed away, all except a wing which escaped the fire and is now used by a little congregation for a German preaching-house; but its real mission was not to give a home to a few neglected children; it was to call George Whitefield back and forth between the two chief portions of the English-speaking world.

In theology he was not a master. There was one doctrine, however, that he understood, namely, the doctrine of regeneration; and this he knew by that best of all means of knowledge, his experience. To him the new birth was the point of all preaching, the central truth of all religion. In this appears the divinity of his mission. It is hardly conceivable that God should so gloriously endow a man to preach any other doctrine.

Now that the voice is passed there remains almost nothing of all his thinking or his doing. No printed pages hold the substance of his

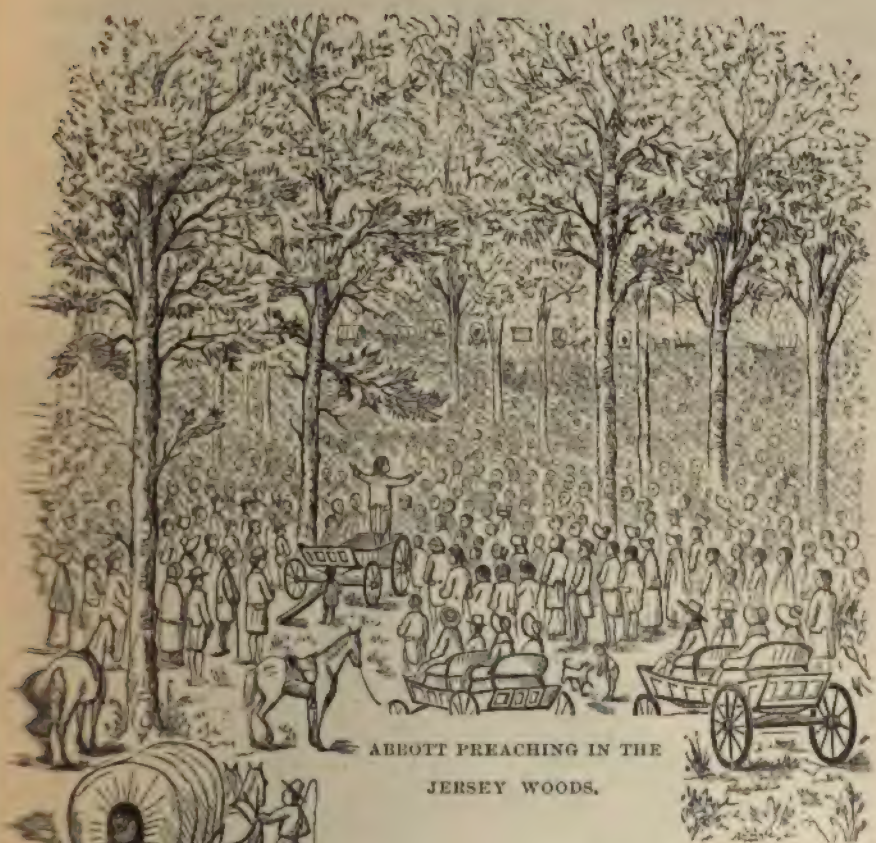


wonderful discourses, for their substance was too subtle to be captured by the crude processes of writing or printing, and the reader turns away from the meager results of their efforts which remain with a sigh of disappointment and surprise; no system of benevolence has survived him to prove how devotedly he loved every body except himself; no theory of preaching put forth by this master of pulpit rhetoric and elocution reveals the mystery of his art; no treatise of doctrine sets forth the distinctive faith of him who believed so mightily; no record shows again the visions of him who had the eye of a seer, and only a single Church, and the ruins of an orphan school, scorched with fire and deserted by its occupation, helps to account for what he did with all the money he begged and gave away. He was "a voice," and his history is an echo; yet doubtless in the upper sky, and on the celestial air, it still carries with it all the music of its sweet humanity, and all the resonance of its God-given power.



MAP OF THE THIRTEEN COLONIES.





ABBOTT PREACHING IN THE  
JERSEY WOODS.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### METHODISM AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

WESLEY'S "Calm Address" to the people of the British Colonies in North America, which, as has been shown, caused him so much trouble at home, was also a great affliction to his friends abroad. Some copies of it found their way into the hands of prominent revolutionists, and thenceforth until near the close of the war a Methodist preacher was an object of suspicion; a man liable to be robbed without protection, and imprisoned without even a form of justice.

In view of the increasing troubles of his brethren in America, of



which his own political course was one chief occasion, Mr. Wesley addressed them the following fatherly advice, under date of London, March 1, 1775:—

**"MY DEAR BRETHREN:—**You were never in your lives in so critical a situation as you are at this time. It is your part to be peace-makers: to be loving and tender to all; but to addict yourselves to no party. In spite of all solicitations, of rough or smooth words, say not one word against one or the other side. Keep yourselves pure; do all you can to help and soften all; but beware how you adopt another's jar.



GRACE M. E. CHURCH, WILMINGTON, DEL.

"See that you act in full union with each other: this is of the utmost consequence. Not only let there be no bitterness or anger, but no shyness or coldness between you. Mark all those that would set one against the other. Some such will never be wanting. But give them no countenance; rather ferret them out, and drag them into open day."

But it was too late to repair the mischief he had done. The name "Methodist" began to have a Toryish flavor, especially if the bearer of it were an Englishman; and even the native preachers, into whose



hands the work was soon to fall, were persecuted on account of their alleged want of devotion to the cause of the Revolution.

**William Watters**, the first American itinerant preacher, was born in Baltimore County, Maryland, October 16th, 1751. He possessed what may be called the religious temperament, and was thought to be a Christian from his youth; but at the age of twenty he heard Strawbridge, Williams, and King, who all preached the doctrine that the Saviour preached to Nicodemus, but which, he says, "was all a mystery to him." At length, after a season of deep conviction, he was clearly brought into a state of regeneration, and presently, through the reading of one of Mr. Wesley's sermons on sanctification, he became a possessor and advocate of that experience also. Thus the race of native American Methodist preachers begins with an example of the divine power of those great doctrines of the Gospel the preaching whereof has ever been attended with the awakening of sinners, the pardon of penitents, the regeneration of believers, and the perfecting in love of consecrated souls.

In 1772, being then just come of age, Watters was "called out," as the phrase was, by Robert Williams, who took him with him on his Norfolk Circuit, to learn how to preach by preaching, just as people learn to do other things by doing them. The departure of this young recruit for the itinerant ministry was a very solemn and affecting event. His friends hung about him and wept over him as if he had been a volunteer leaving home to join the army in active service, or, later on, a foreign missionary leaving his native country to live and labor and die in a heathen land.

Whoever is inclined to smile at the sorrow and mourning with which this young man, the first in America, was sent forth to be a Methodist itinerant, let him remember that to take upon himself that office in those days implied the deliberate sacrifice of all things for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. To enter this ministry was to face the certainty of poverty, privation, dangers, ridicule, and opposition, with a good prospect of mob violence and martyrdom; and in this view of the subject the act of this young man in leading what was to be the long column of American itinerants was one of the most heroic things ever done in this country. No wonder, then, that there was sorrow in the old home when this first young minister set forth on this strange career.



The ultimate test of all things is, whether or not they fulfill their purpose. Judged by any other test than this, the sending out of a raw young farmer to organize and preside over a circuit, after only a few weeks of training under the senior preacher, would be pronounced a piece of folly ; but Watters could preach in such a manner as to bring sinners to Christ, and that, in those days, was understood to be sufficient. Poorly furnished in every thing else which is supposed to constitute a fitness for the holy office, God seemed to be well enough pleased to use him for some glorious soul-saving work ; and if God was satisfied who has any right to complain ?

**Philip Gatch**, another native itinerant, and one of the most admirable characters in early Methodist history, was born near Georgetown, Maryland, 1751, and was "called out" by Rankin in the same year with Watters—1772—to travel a circuit which embraced the whole State of New Jersey. This was rather a heavy charge for an untutored youth of twenty-one ; but Gatch had "experienced religion" and knew what it was ; he could read the Bible, and pray his way into it far enough to find the pith and power of it ; and the pentecostal Spirit gave him a "tongue." Thus he was able for the space of two years, in spite of much hostility, to work this great plantation, and to gather some harvests of souls ; after which initiation and training still greater things were possible to him.

**Benjamin Abbott**.—But the greatest marvel of all was Benjamin Abbott, a Jersey farmer, who at the age of forty was transformed from a drinking, fighting, swearing, gambling sinner—a leader in all sorts of wickedness and a terror in the community—into a man of God, a preacher of righteousness, whose success still stands unequalled in all the religious history of America. Not even Whitefield could attract such vast congregations ; while the spiritual power he wielded was absolutely incredible to that slow faith which refuses to believe in an effect without an adequate visible cause, whether it be in mechanics or religion, nature or grace.

In the days of his impenitence he had often attended divine service with his wife, who was a member of the Presbyterian Church ; yet he says : "I had never heard the nature of conviction or conversion. It was a dark time respecting religion, and little or nothing was ever said about experimental religion ; and to my knowledge I never had heard either



man or woman say that they had the pardoning love of God in their souls, or knew their sins were forgiven."

But at length one of the itinerants visited his neighborhood, and Abbott, who was now often tormented with a sense of his sins and his danger, went to find out what help there might be for him in this new form of religion. Of his exercises of mind on this occasion he gives the following account:—

"The word reached my heart in such a manner that it shook every joint in my body; tears flowed in abundance, and I cried out for mercy, of which the people took notice, and many were melted into tears. When the sermon was over the people flocked around the preacher and began to dispute with him about principles of religion. I said that there never was such preaching as this; but the people said, 'Abbott is going mad.'

"Satan suggested to me that my day of grace was over; therefore I might pray and cry, but he was sure of me at last.

"In passing through a lonely wood at night, I was tempted to commit suicide; but while looking for a suitable place for the deed, I was deterred by an inward voice, which said, 'This torment is nothing compared to hell.'" This was logic too clear to be resisted. "I forthwith mounted my wagon, and believing the tempter to be immediately behind me, drove home under the greatest anxiety imaginable, with my hair rising on my head. My dreams that night were appalling; the next day, seeking relief in the labors of the field, my troubled heart beat so loud that I could hear the strokes. I threw down my scythe and stood weeping for my sins. I believe I could not have continued in the body had not God moderated the pain and anxiety I was in, but must have expired before the going down of the sun." Under this terrible stress of conviction he fell upon his knees in the field, and, for the first time in his life, prayed aloud.

Hastening the same day to a Methodist meeting, he says:—

"I went in, sat down, and took my little son upon my knee. The preacher began soon after. His word was attended with such power that it ran through me from head to foot; I shook and trembled like Belshazzar, and felt that I should cry out if I did not leave the house, which I determined to do that I might not expose myself among the people; but when I attempted to put my little son down and rise to



go, I found that my strength had failed me, and the use of my limbs was so far gone that I was utterly unable to rise. Immediately I cried aloud, '*Save, Lord, or I perish!*' But before the preacher concluded I refrained and wiped my eyes; my heart gave way to shame, and I was tempted to wish I was dead or could die, as I had so exposed myself that my neighbors and acquaintance would laugh at and despise me. When meeting was over I thought to speak to the preacher, but such a crowd got round him, disputing points of doctrine, that I could not conveniently get an opportunity. That evening I set up family prayer, it being the first time I ever had attempted to pray in my family. My wife, being a strict Presbyterian, was a praying woman, and much pleased with having family prayer, so that she proved a great help to me and endeavored to encourage me in my duty; although, dear creature, at that time she knew nothing of experimental religion."

The next day, accompanied by his wife, Abbott went more than ten miles to a Methodist assembly, appealed to the minister for counsel and comfort, and asked to be baptized, hoping it would relieve his distress; for, as yet, he had no idea of justification by faith.

"Are you a Quaker?" asked the preacher.

"No," he replied, "I am nothing but a poor, wretched, condemned sinner," and burst into tears.

"Then you are the very man Christ died for," replied the preacher. "It is the lost that Christ came to seek, and the greatest of sinners that he came to save."

That night, the 11th of October, 1772—he is minute in such memorable dates—he awoke from terrible dreams and saw, as in a vision, the Lord Jesus, with extended arms, saying, "I died for you." He wept and adored God with a joyful heart. "At that moment," he continues, "the Scriptures were wonderfully opened to my understanding. My heart felt as light as a bird, being relieved of that load of guilt which before had bowed down my spirits, and my body felt as active as when I was eighteen, so that the outward and inward man were both animated." Upon this he rose from his bed, called up the family, expounded the Scriptures and prayed, and then set off to spend the day in telling his neighbors what God had done for him.

While he was relating his experience to his neighbors, and ex-



horting them to flee from the wrath to come, some laughed, others cried, and some thought he had gone distracted. Before night a report was spread all through the neighborhood that he was raving mad. A neighboring clergyman tried laboriously to deliver him from the "strong delusions of the devil;" whereat Abbott was a good deal perplexed. "It was suggested to my mind," he says, "he may be right. But I went a little out of the road, and kneeled down and prayed to God if I was deceived to undeceive me; and the Lord said to me, 'Why do you doubt? Is not Christ all-sufficient? is he not able? Have you not felt his blood applied?' I then sprang upon my feet and cried out, 'Not all the devils in hell shall make me doubt;' for I knew that I was converted. At that instant I was filled with unspeakable raptures of joy."

Was not this also "a brand plucked from the burning?"

Abbott now devoted himself to the study of the Bible, and began to exhort all with whom he had any intercourse. The Scriptures were wonderfully opened to him. In his sleep texts occurred to his mind, with divisions and applications, and he woke up preaching from them. His good wife checked him, saying, "You are always preaching;" "however," he adds, "it caused her to ponder these things in her heart. I saw that if ever I should win her to Christ it must be by love and a close walk with God; for I observed that she watched me closely." Soon after she was happily converted under a sermon by Philip Gatch, and when Abbott returned home he met her at the door with tears of joy in her eyes. "We embraced each other," he says, "and she cried out, 'Now I know what you told me is true, for the Lord hath pardoned my sins.' We had a blessed meeting; it was the happiest day we had ever seen together. 'Now,' said she, 'I am willing to be a Methodist too;'" from that time we went on, hand and hand, helping and building each other up in the Lord. These were the beginning of days to us. Our children also began to yield obedience to the Lord, and in the course of about three months after my wife's conversion we had six children converted to God."

From "exhorting" he at last began to preach; his first sermon being over the coffin of a neighbor. His word was now uniformly "with power;" under which the sturdiest sinners trembled, or escaped in alarm. He was a man of great natural courage, and though there



was an habitual tenderness and humility in his manners, often revealing itself in tears, yet woe to the man who dared in his presence to treat religion with ridicule or irreverence. Of him it might be said, as was said of certain other ministers of Christ: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

The memoirs of Abbott abound with instances of the immediate manifestation of divine power, which, since the day of Pentecost, is to be accounted as a part of the Gospel scheme, and may be looked for in connection with its faithful presentation. One of the circuits which he organized was in a desperate neighborhood called Hell Neck; of which he writes: "One sinner there said he had heard Abbott swear, and had seen him fight, and now would go and hear him preach. The word reached his heart, and he soon after became a convert to the Lord. After meeting he invited me home with him, and several others invited me to preach at their houses, so that I got preaching places all through the neighborhood, and a considerable revival of religion took place, although it had been so noted for wickedness."

Such a bold invasion of the strongholds of Satan was likely to be resented by that great adversary of souls, and various and desperate were the efforts made by his servants to frighten or defeat this sturdy evangelist. At Deerfield he heard of a gang of ruffians who had threatened to tar and feather any Methodist preacher who should venture to open his mouth in their settlement; but Deerfield was in the line of his duty, and thither he went to preach. "At first," says he, "I thought I would return. Consulting with flesh and blood, I concluded that it would be a disagreeable thing to have my clothes spoiled, and my hair all matted together with tar; but I called to mind the sufferings of my Lord, and immediately resolved to go and preach, if I had to die for it.

"I found a large congregation filling the house and crowding the neighboring premises. I went in among them and gave out a hymn, but no one sung. I then sung four lines myself, while every joint in my body trembled. I said, 'Let us pray,' and before prayer was over the power of God fell on me in such a manner that it instantly removed from me the fear of man, and some cried out. I arose, took my text,



and preached with great liberty. Before the meeting was over I saw many tears drop from their eyes, and the head of the mob said that he had never heard such preaching since Robert Williams went away; so I came off clear. Glory be to God, who stood by me in this trying hour!"

On one occasion he was called to see a Quaker woman who had been awakened under one of his sermons, and was in an awful agony of conviction. When he arrived she was sitting with both hands clenched in her hair, and crying out "Lord, have mercy on me! Save, Lord, or I perish!"

Abbott told her to pray in faith; look to Jesus; lay hold of the promises, and God would have mercy on her.

"But I cannot pray," said the distracted woman.

"You do pray very well," said Abbott. "Go on."

"She cannot pray in English," said a pious friend who was present.

"Let her pray in Dutch, then. God understands Dutch as well as English," was Abbott's reply.

A hymn was now sung, and when it was over, Abbott says, "I felt such faith, that I told them the Lord would deliver her; and said, Let us pray. In a few minutes she clapped her hands together and cried 'My Lord, my God, and my Father!' Her soul was immediately set at liberty, and she sprang up, rejoicing, and giving glory to God. Her husband burst into a flood of tears. I exhorted him to look to God, and he would find mercy. In about six weeks after he was safely converted."

Among the converts in these his early labors was a bigoted Papist, who had determined to murder his wife for going to the Methodist meeting, but somehow was induced to go himself; another was a wild, drunken school-master, whom Abbott prayed out of the *delirium tremens*, into the kingdom of God. A band of Indians who once strayed into his congregation were deeply wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, and at the close of the sermon crowded about him, eagerly desiring him to show them how to be saved. For years this Jersey farmer was God's instrument in working a constant succession of gracious miracles. For want of houses to preach in, he often held his meetings in groves, where thousands upon thousands assembled to hear him; and as he preached in "God's first temples," with a Jersey wagon for



a pulpit, multitudes of sinners were overwhelmed by the power of the word, many of whom were speedily and joyfully converted.

**Gough, of Perry Hall.**—If any one is saying, These were all common, ignorant people, and, therefore, these excitements are natural enough, let him read this account of the conversion of another style of man, taken from the pages of Stevens's admirable "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church:—

"Asbury's usefulness in the Baltimore Circuit at this time had permanently important results. He gathered into the young Societies not a few of those influential families whose opulence and social position gave material strength to Methodism through much of its early history in that city, while their exemplary devotion helped to maintain its primitive purity and power."

Henry Dorsey Gough and his family were distinguished examples. Gough possessed a fortune in lands and money amounting to more than three hundred thousand dollars. He had married a daughter of Governor Ridgeley. His country residence—Perry Hall, about twelve miles from the city—was one of the most spacious and elegant in America at that time. But he was an unhappy man in the midst of his luxury. His wife had been deeply impressed by the Methodist preaching, but he forbade her to hear them again. While reveling with wine and gay companions, one evening, it was proposed that they should divert themselves by going together to a Methodist assembly. Asbury was the preacher, and no godless diversion could be found in his presence.

"What nonsense," exclaimed one of the convivialists, as they returned, "what nonsense have we heard to-night!"

"No," replied Gough, startling them with sudden surprise; "what we have heard is the truth, the truth as it is in Jesus."

"I will never hinder you again from hearing the Methodists," he said, as he entered his house and met his wife. The impression of the sermon was so profound that he could no longer enjoy his accustomed pleasures. He became deeply serious, and at last melancholy, "and was near destroying himself" under the awakened sense of his mis-spent life; but God mercifully preserved him. Riding to one of his plantations, he heard the voice of prayer and praise in a cabin, and listening, discovered that a negro from a neighboring estate was lead-



ing the devotions of his own slaves, and offering fervent thanksgivings for the blessings of their depressed lot. His heart was touched, and with emotion he exclaimed, "Alas, O Lord! I have my thousands and tens of thousands, and yet, ungrateful wretch that I am, I never thanked thee, as this poor slave does, who has scarcely clothes to put on or food to satisfy his hunger." The luxurious master was taught a lesson on the nature of true contentment and happiness, which he could never forget. His work-worn servants in their lowly cabins knew a blessedness which he had never found in his sumptuous mansion. He returned home, pondering the mystery, with a distressed and contrite heart. He retired from his table, which was surrounded by a large company of his friends, and threw himself upon his knees in a chamber. While there, imploring the mercy of God, he received conscious pardon and peace. In a transport of joy he went to his company, exclaiming, "I have found the Methodists' blessing; I have found the Methodists' God!"

Both he and his wife now became members of the Methodist Society, and Perry Hall was henceforth an asylum for the itinerants and a "preaching place." Rankin visited it next year, and says, "I spent a most agreeable evening with them. A numerous family of servants were called in for exhortation and prayer, so that, with them and the rest of the house, we had a little congregation."

"Perry Hall," says Lednum, "was the resort of much company, among whom the skeptic and the Romanist were sometimes found. Members of the Baltimore bar, the *élite* of Maryland, were there. But it mattered not who were there; when the bell rang for family devotion they were seen in the chapel, which Mr. Gough had erected near by, and if there was no male person present who could lead the devotions, Mrs. Gough read a chapter in the Bible, gave out a hymn, which was often raised and sung by the colored servants, after which she would engage in prayer. Take her altogether, 'few such have been found on earth.' Asbury called her a 'true daughter' to himself, and Coke, 'a precious woman of fine sense.'"

Thus among high and low, rich and poor, the Lord was raising up a spiritual people to praise him, and to carry forward his work in the New World.



**The Second American Conference** met in Philadelphia, May 25, 1774. The reports showed 10 circuits, situated in the Colonies of New York, "The Jerseys," Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia; 17 preachers—an increase of seven in one year; and 2,073 members of Society—nearly double the number reported in 1773.

Of the proceedings of the Conference there remain only a few references to economical arrangements. It was ordered that "every itinerant in full membership in the Conference must own the horse provided for him by his circuit;" that "each preacher should be allowed six pounds, Pennsylvania currency, a quarter, (the Pennsylvania "pound" was two dollars and sixty-six cents,) besides traveling expenses; that Rankin, as "General Assistant," should be supported by the circuits where he might spend his time; that a collection should be made at Easter on each circuit to relieve the chapel debts and itinerants in want; and that all were to change circuits at the end of six months; while Asbury and Pilmoor, in Philadelphia and New York, were to make an exchange once a quarter.

**Freeborn Garrettson.**—Among the little band who held the field during the War of the Revolution was Freeborn Garrettson, whose name and fame are so deeply interwoven in the history of Methodism in New York. He was born in 1752, in Maryland, on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay, near the mouth of the Susquehanna River, where the Garrettson plantation still remains in the possession of a branch of the family. This able and admirable minister and organizer was converted in 1775, and at once the way seemed to open for his becoming a preacher. This idea he resisted as long as he dared; but at length, after being warned in visions by night and overwhelmed with conviction by day, he submitted to the call of God and entered the regular work of the itinerant ministry in 1775, in which he soon found use for all his native courage and his heaven-born patience and devotion. A "Tory" was an object of especial hatred to the patriots, among whom, as we have seen, the impression prevailed that the Methodist preachers were all Tories; and on which account they were in constant peril. In Maryland Garrettson was mobbed and imprisoned on suspicion of too much loyalty to King George; and on one occasion he was beaten almost to death



with a stick by one of the magistrates of Queen Anne County, for no other offense than that of being a Methodist preacher.

Pedicord, another itinerant, was attacked and beaten on the public road with such violence that he carried the scars to his grave. Foster, Wren, and Forrest were thrown into prison, and only released by their furnishing bonds for their future "good behavior;" which was understood to mean not to preach any more in the county. But there were always more counties somewhere, and thus the brave



FREEBORN GARRETTSON.

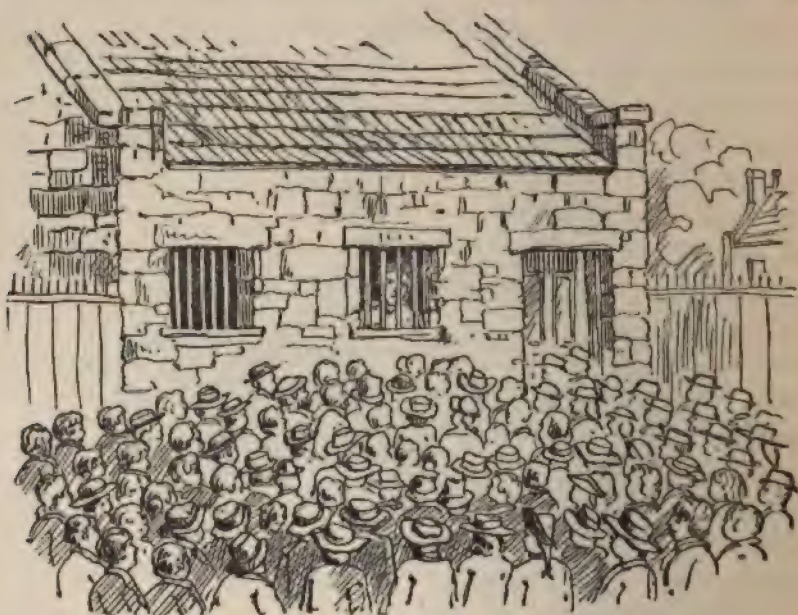
First Presiding Elder of New York District.

pioneers held to their work, literally obeying the command of Christ, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another," and patiently accepting the truth of his declaration that, "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord."

**A Prison for a Pulpit.**—The experience of Joseph Hartley is worthy of special notice. After being "bound over" in penal bonds of five hundred pounds not to preach any more in Queen Anne County he took up his mission to the sinners in the county of Talbot. Here he was whipped and thrust into prison, where he was kept for a



considerable time ; but from the window of his cell he kept up his ministry, and at length so great were the crowds attracted to this strange service that the work of the Lord went on faster than ever. On Sundays the people for ten or fifteen miles around used to assemble in front of his window, numbers of whom were happily converted ; and so deep was the impression made by this preaching prisoner that some of the inhabitants declared he would convert the whole town if he were not released. The feeling in Hartley's favor grew so strong



HARTLEY PREACHING IN PRISON.

that the magistrates were glad to throw open the doors of his prison, provided he would go away and preach no more in Talbot County. Nevertheless the work of grace went on in the community, and a powerful revival followed, which at length resulted in the establishment of a flourishing Society.

**A Great Revival in Virginia.**—While these persecutions were in progress in Maryland, the neighboring colony of Virginia was the scene of a great revival of religion, chiefly under the labors of that warm-hearted English evangelist, Shadford. In 1775 and 1776, while the whole country was seething and sometimes boiling over with



revolutionary wrath, no greater proof than this could be desired that the Lord was in the word as preached by his itinerant ministers. The center of this revival was the famous old Brunswick Circuit, to which Shadford was appointed at the Conference of 1775. It comprised fourteen counties in the south-eastern part of Virginia and extended over into Bute and Halifax counties, in North Carolina.

On his arrival Shadford found about eight hundred members in the Societies of his circuit, who, however, were very poorly organized; his first care, therefore, was to reform the classes, appoint proper leaders, and see that all the preachers who shared the circuit with him met their congregations in class at the close of every public service, in true Wesleyan fashion. The fruit of this labor was apparent in the rapid growth of the people in religious knowledge, and soon the whole circuit was in a glow of revival.

Among Shadford's chief friends and helpers in this great circuit was the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, a parish clergyman of the Episcopal, or English, Church, as it was then called, in Dinwiddie County, Virginia. He was a thoroughly evangelical man, an admirer of Methodism, a believer in the Wesleyan views of the doctrines of Regeneration, Free Grace, and Entire Sanctification: in all of which respects he was a notable exception to the clergy of his order who claimed to represent "the Church" in America. This good man entered heartily into the revival work, organized classes among his own people, ranged the country preaching in all directions, while his own Church was in constant use for revival meetings, and his house was a home for the homeless itinerants, in whose success he had the grace to rejoice.

Mr. Rankin, who went down to visit his brethren on the Brunswick Circuit during the height of the revival, gives the following account of a Sunday which he spent with Shadford:—

"We went to the chapel at ten, where I had liberty of mind and strength of body beyond my expectation. After preaching I met the Society, and was more relieved both in body and mind. At four in the afternoon I preached again, from 'I set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.' I had gone through about two thirds of my discourse, and was bringing the words home to the present *now*, when such power descended that hundreds fell to the ground, and the house seemed to shake with the presence of God. The chapel was full of



white and black, and many were without that could not get in. Look wherever we would we saw nothing but streaming eyes and faces bathed in tears; and heard nothing but groans and strong cries after God and the Lord Jesus Christ. My voice was drowned amid the groans and prayers of the congregation. I then sat down in the pulpit, and both Mr. S. and I were so filled with the divine presence that we could only say, 'This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!' Husbands were inviting their wives to go to heaven, wives their husbands: parents their children and children their parents: brothers their sisters and sisters their brothers. In short, those who were happy in God themselves were for bringing all their friends to him in their arms. This mighty effusion of the Spirit continued for above an hour: in which time many were awakened, some found peace with God, and others his pure love. We attempted to speak or sing again and again; but no sooner had we begun than our voices were drowned. It was with much difficulty that we at last persuaded the people, as night drew on, to retire to their own homes."

Rankin also attended one of Shadford's quarterly meetings, of which he says:—

"No chapel or preaching-house in Virginia would have contained one third of the congregation. Our friends, knowing this, had contrived to shade with boughs of trees a space that would contain two or three thousand persons. Under this, fully screened from the rays of the sun, we held our general love-feast. It began between eight and nine on Wednesday morning, and continued till noon. Many testified that they had 'redemption through the blood' of Jesus, 'even the forgiveness of sins.' And many were able to declare that it had 'cleansed' them 'from all sin.' So clear, so full, so strong was their testimony, that while some were speaking their experience hundreds were in tears, and others vehemently crying to God for pardon or holiness.

"About eight our watch-night began. Mr. J. [supposed to be Pastor Jarratt] preached an excellent sermon; the rest of the preachers exhorted and prayed with divine energy. Surely, for the work wrought on these two days, many will praise God to all eternity."

It was recorded as a remarkable fact that "many children from eight to ten years old are now under strong convictions, and some of them are savingly converted to God;" a hint at the prevailing notion



among Christians of those times that it was out of the mouths of grown up people only that the Lord could have any perfect praise.

"One of the doctrines which are particularly insisted upon," writes Pastor Jarratt, "is, that of a present salvation; a salvation not only from the guilt and power, but also from the root of sin; a cleansing from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that we may perfect holiness in the fear of God; a going on to perfection, which we sometimes define by 'Loving God with all our heart.' Several who had believed were deeply sensible of their want of this. I have seen both men and women, who had long been happy in a sense of God's pardoning love, as much convicted on account of the remains of sin in their hearts, and as much distressed for a total deliverance from them, as ever I saw any for justification."

He also mentions that "the unhappy disputes between England and her colonies, which just before had engrossed all our conversation, seemed now in most companies to be forgot, while things of far greater importance lay so near the heart."

In this revival, however, there was a very clear marking of the "color line." The chapels being none too large for the white congregations, the negroes were allowed to stand without, crowding about the doors and windows, where they were allowed to pick up such crumbs of comfort as fell from their Master's table. Large numbers of them were converted, but they must needs be organized into "black classes."

This great awakening continued for about two years, and its fruits were sound and substantial.

Writing in September, 1776, Jarratt says: "If you ask, 'How stands the case now with those that have been the subjects of the late work?' I have the pleasure to inform you I have not heard of any one apostate yet. Upon the whole, things are in as flourishing a condition as can reasonably be expected, considering what great numbers, of various capacities and stations, have lately been added to the Societies."

On making up his statistics for the Conference of 1766 Shadford found that the membership of the Brunswick Circuit was 2,666, an increase of over 1,800 in a single year. Thus, in spite of the political clamor and confusion which sorely crippled other communions, American Methodism gained this year an increase in membership of 1,873.



**Asbury in Seclusion.**—As the war-cloud grew darker the position of the itinerants became more perilous. Danger could not frighten them from their work, but the laws now began to place insurmountable obstacles in their path. In Maryland, for example, a test oath was ordered to be administered to all doubtful persons; which oath was a pledge to take up arms in aid of the Revolution if called to do so by the colonial authorities. Of course such oaths were not for the clergy; but the itinerants were not "clergymen;" they were only "preachers;" and here was a convenient cudgel with which to belabor

them. Whatever may have been the personal politics of Asbury, he had not come to America to shoot men, but to save them; and therefore, after being denounced as an Englishman, and escaping the death intended for him by some active Revolutionist, who put a bullet through his chaise but failed to reach its occupant, he took his departure for the Colony of Delaware, where the test-oath was not so rigidly enforced.

But even here there was a "Light Horse Patrol," which, in the name of Liberty, practiced a good deal of petty tyranny. In April, 1778, a



ARRESTING A METHODIST.

band of this revolutionary police came to the house of the Hon. Thomas White, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of the County of Kent, seized him, and carried him off to jail under the charge of being a Methodist! It was on the plantation of this same Methodist judge that Asbury had been forced to take refuge from his enemies, who, if they had known what prey was concealed in that little cabin hidden among the shrubbery beyond the orchard, might have made another notable capture in the name of liberty.



For five weeks the judge was held a prisoner; prayers being offered night and day for his safety by his godly household, whose devotions were led by the man of all others whom the patriots now wished to capture, or else to drive out of the country. When his trial came on his wife conducted his defense; perhaps for the reason that no lawyer could be found to do it; and so admirably did she plead her cause that her husband and client was "acquitted," though he was unquestionably guilty of the offense charged against him.

Meanwhile the search for the hated British Methodist was kept up by the patriot patrol, who sometimes used violence as well as vigilance; it therefore became the part of discretion—valor was out of the question—for Asbury to fly from this place of concealment, lest his friends should have their house burned over their heads by this irresponsible mob on suspicion that the "Tory preacher" might be hidden in it. This he did; and like a runaway negro, a fugitive from injustice, he took to the woods and swamps, and it was nearly a month before he ventured to return. During this time he found shelter in the rude cabin of a friendly backwoodsman; and he mentions also that in these thirty or forty days in the wilderness his soul was blessed with very precious manifestations of divine love.

Although a recluse, Asbury was the chief of the itinerant gospel band. One by one, or two by two, they visited him, keeping him informed of the progress of the work, which he continued to direct by letters. In 1779 he ventured to hold a Conference at the Judge's mansion; but for a time such was the storm of patriotic persecution that he could only leave his wood-embowered cottage by night: and this he did, going from house to house in the darkness, and preaching the Gospel, which was as a fire shut up in his bones.

Perhaps this good man would have made a more brilliant figure in history, as history goes, if he had taken the oath which he was at such pains to avoid. If he had joined the Continental army and marched to the defense of liberty, he might also have come down the generations as one of the Revolutionary fathers, with a piquant perfume of gunpowder about him; but the fathers of Methodism had not learned that the ten commandments, or any of them, might be suspended by the vote of a majority in a Republic, or by the royal will of a King. They held to the plain letter of the law of



God, which, in the real or fancied exigences of government, is so easily explained away. If any modern Methodist is moved to mourn as he finds himself confronted with the statement that so few of the fathers of his Church had epaulets on their shoulders, let him comfort himself with the other recollection that so few of them had blood on their hands. The most of them were brave enough not to be driven by the rush of patriotic fury into laying down the Bible and taking up the sword. They could suffer and die, if need be, for the sake of the cause to which they had devoted themselves; but if they were to be martyrs, they preferred to suffer for Christ's sake and the Gospel's rather than for the sake of what difference there might be between living under the government of a congress and under that of a parliament and king.

**The English Missionaries Depart.**—The inglorious flight of Rodda in 1777, made necessary by his too ardent service of King George; and the more dignified departure of Rankin, who could not keep pace with events, left only two of the English brethren in the field; Asbury and Shadford. It appears that these two men had hoped to weather the storm; but it was now evident that the patriots were bent on driving out of the country, or else out of the world, every man of any consequence who would not swear allegiance to their ideas of liberty. At last Shadford's British heart failed him, and he sought out his only remaining Wesleyan co-patriot, into whose hands the care of all the Societies had fallen, for the purpose of taking a survey of the situation.

It was a discouraging situation enough. Two of the three chief points which had determined the geographical position of the Methodist circle were blotted out. It was no longer possible to supply the New York and Philadelphia pulpits with members of the Conference; Norfolk, Va., had been abandoned; the country was full of bands of armed men—soldiers, patrols, bushwhackers fighting on their own hook—all of whom had a strong prejudice against men of their profession. The Americans were still divided into Whigs and Tories; for the fate of the revolution still hung in even scale; and thus, in spite of their determination to let all politics alone and attend only to the ministry of the word, the preachers stood between two fires. What was to be done? As the last and proper resort they



pealed the case to Heaven, and separated to spend a day in solemn fasting and prayer.

It was no light occasion that brought Asbury and Shadford to their knees to inquire of the Lord whether they should or should not abandon their work. Shadford had suffered as well as his chief. He had been threatened with imprisonment in Virginia, and, after a year and a half of remarkable usefulness, he left it for the North in the depth of winter. On his route he was lost in the woods at night, when the weather was intensely cold and the snow a foot deep. He could discover no house; without relief he must perish. He fell upon his knees and prayed for deliverance. On rising he stood some time listening, when he heard the distant barking of a dog. Following the sound, he was welcomed at the house of a plantation. Thus saved, he hastened into Maryland; but there also he was required to renounce his loyalty, or be in peril of imprisonment, if not death. He could not travel without a pass, nor have a pass without taking the oaths.

In the evening of this solemn day of decision Shadford rejoined his chief, and inquired what conclusion he had reached.

"I do not see my way clear to go to England," responded the steadfast Asbury. Shadford replied, "My work here is done; I cannot stay; it is as strongly impressed on my mind that I ought to go home, as it was at first that I ought to come to America."

"Then one of us must be under a delusion," rejoined Asbury.

"Not so," said Shadford; "I may have a call to go, and you to stay."

"I believe," adds Shadford, "we both obeyed the call of Providence. We saw we must part, though we loved as David and Jonathan. And, indeed, these times made us love one another in a peculiar manner. O how glad were we to meet and pour our griefs into each other's bosom!"

Shadford managed to obtain a pass from the military authorities to go to the North, and at once set out across the country for Philadelphia. That night he was attacked by an armed man on the highway, who presented a musket at his breast, threatening his life. He and a companion were allowed at last to proceed, but found that the bridge at Chester was broken down. "With our saddle-bags upon our



backs," he says, "we crept on our hands and knees on a narrow plank to that part of the great bridge that remained standing, and got our horses over the next morning. Thus, through the mercy and goodness of God, we got safe into Chester that night, and the next night into Philadelphia. Here we met three or four of our preachers, who, like ourselves, were refugees. I continued near six weeks before I got a passage, and then embarked for Cork in Ireland; from thence to Wales, and then across to Bristol."

Shadford then resumed his ministry in England, and labored with his characteristic ardor till 1791, when, after twenty-three years of itinerant life, his infirm health required him to take a supernumerary relation to the Conference, and in 1816 he died in great triumph in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

"So we are left alone," writes Asbury; "but I leave myself in the hand of God, relying on his good providence to direct and protect, persuaded that nothing will befall me but what shall conduce to his glory and my benefit." But if "left alone" by the Wesleyan missionaries, Methodism in America had been planted by rivers of waters, and was already bearing fruit abundantly, while a band of faithful and efficient "Helpers," as Wesley called his preachers of the rank and file, were already in the field, who, in spite of all their enemies, were holding most of the ground they had so painfully and faithfully won.

The hearts of the preachers now turned with one accord to Asbury as the man to lead them out of this wilderness of war. He was by far the ablest and most experienced man among them; had been duly appointed by Wesley as "General Assistant for America;" had shown a much better understanding of the Colonial situation and the Colonial temper than Rankin, who was too good a Scotchman to be a good American; and now that he had chosen their people for his people, as well as their God for his God, the native-born preachers, into whose untried but not unskillful hands so great a work had fallen, rallied around their chief, who thenceforth became to them a Joshua: the personal leadership of their English Moses having substantially ended with the arrival in America of his unfortunate Calm Address.

**Influential Friends.**—In this enforced seclusion of nearly two years, Asbury gained some distinguished friends; among them Richard Bassett, of Dover, whose country-seat at Bohemia Manor, and



its old "Bethesda Chapel," came to be very familiar to the itinerants; the one for its warm hospitality, the other for the displays of divine power and glory therein. The high position of Judge Bassett, who was a member of the Convention which formed the Constitution of the new nation, a Senator in Congress, and afterward Governor, was such that he was able to render his itinerant brethren valuable assistance. A letter from Asbury to Rankin had also fallen into the hands of some American officers, wherein was abundant evidence of the love of the writer for the people of his adopted country, and his expectation of seeing it an independent nation. Thus the Governor of Maryland was persuaded that Asbury and the men under his command were in no wise dangerous to the progress of "free institutions," and the preachers were presently allowed to travel their circuits without further magisterial hindrance; though they still had to contend with infidelity, which, from first to last, was a prominent factor in the working of the war, and which still gave them frequent tastes of ruffianism which kept their mission from losing the excitement of danger.

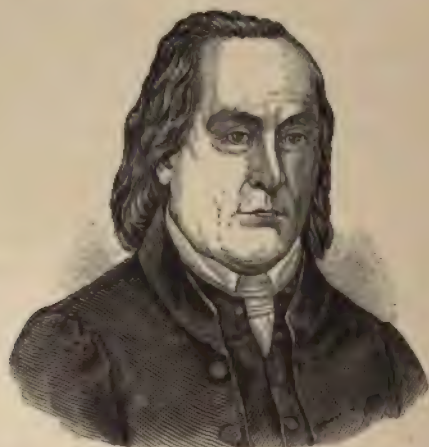
Another well-known name is that of Philip Barratt, "the pious Judge Barratt," as Asbury calls him, who helped to shelter the itinerants through the stormy war period, and who entered into eternal peace a little while before the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1784.

Another honored name is that of the Rev. Dr. M'Gaw; one of the friends of Asbury in his retirement, and soon afterward called to be Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. This clergyman, and the excellent Virginia rector, Jarratt, stand as points of admiration in the history of the English Church in America; shining illustrations, like Fletcher, Perronet, Grimshaw, and Venn, in England, of how good and how pleasant a thing it is for Methodists and Episcopalians, brethren of the same blood, to dwell together in harmony if not in unity.

**Otterbein and the United Brethren.**—The close fellowship, followed by the open rupture, of Mr. Wesley with the Moravian Church and its leader, Count Zinzendorf, of Herrnhut, is called to mind by the ardent friendship which existed between Francis Asbury and the Rev. Philip William Otterbein; the leading mind in the



formation of the body called the United Brethren in Christ. In the year 1742 Count Zinzendorf visited Pennsylvania, and by his earnest preaching of Free Grace, then quite a doctrinal wonder in America, called together, in addition to those of his own Society, the United Brethren who had immigrated to that colony, a number of Lutherans, German Reformers, Mennonites, Tunkers, etc., all of whom were won over to his views, and who were afterward united into what was called "The Congregation of God in the Spirit." Their Arminian theology brought them into conflict with the German Reformed Church, whose clergy were pronounced Calvinists; many of them wanting also in the knowledge and personal experience of evangelical religion.



REV. PHILIP WILLIAM OTTERBEIN.

Some ten years later Mr. Otterbein, then a minister in the German Reformed Church, came out to America. He was too spiritually minded to suit the temper of the Lutheran Church; but he soon found that a political Church in the colonies was no more spiritually minded than the same Church at home, and after some years of service among the American Lutherans he swung away from his moorings and started out to worship God for himself, and to give what help he could to whoever chose to go with him. In 1774 he organized, at Howard's Hill, in Baltimore, what he called an Evangelical Reformed Church, which became the center of a considerable conference of Churches under the name of United Brethren; of which himself and the Rev. Martin



Boehm, father of the late Rev. Henry Boehm, were the first superintendents or bishops.

Wherever the itinerants went in the German-speaking regions of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, they were likely to find families, if not Societies, of these evangelical German Christians, who gave them a cordial welcome; and if they were so happy as to possess a church, it was sure to be at the service of the itinerants whenever they appeared. Otterbein and Asbury were deeply attached to each other. They preached together in many revivals, and when Dr. Coke arrived to set apart Francis Asbury for the office of General Superintendent of the Methodist Societies in America, Otterbein assisted at his ordination.

Modern Methodists may well extend a brotherly hand to the members of that communion whose early history is so preciously interwoven with that of their own. The body at present consists of between thirty and forty "Conference Districts;" over five thousand "preaching places," only about one-fifth of which are "meeting-houses;" nearly a thousand "itinerant preachers;" and, in round numbers, a membership of one hundred thousand souls.



METROPOLITAN MEMORIAL M. E. CHURCH, WASHINGTON, D. C.









FRANCIS ASHURY.  
[From the painting by Whitehouse, in the Ashbury Memorial Chapel,  
Huddersworth, England.]



GEORGE WASHINGTON.





## CHAPTER XVIII.


### A CHURCH FOR THE NEW NATION.

**War vs. Religion.**—That long-drawn misery called the War of the Revolution, wore itself out in 1782, though peace was not formally declared until 1783.

It had been a period of sin as well as of misery, for colonial Piety was compelled to wait until colonial Liberty had settled her quarrel: thus iniquity abounded and the love of many waxed cold. The doctrines of the patriots implied the largest faith in man, but they did not always imply any considerable faith in God; the hottest republicanism and the coldest infidelity being often found in the same mind. Washington knew how to pray, but in this, as in many other things, he was an exceptional soldier; while, as is well-known, the opening of the first American Congress with prayer was on account of the unexpected presence of a clergyman, and not according to any previous plan.

It is doubtful if the Colonies could have achieved their independence while they were so young and weak without the aid of France; who, besides sending a few troops to their assistance, kept the common enemy busy on the other side of the water. But along with French sympathy came French philosophy, whose teachings accorded well with the lawlessness and license which war always brings. Voltaire, the great French apostle in politics, literature, and irreligion, was a more agreeable teacher than Jesus. The one preached death as the end of all things to a sinner, while the other announced the unwelcome fact of a future perdition for ungodly men.

Besides, it was no small trial to the faith and patience of the sturdy Colonists to have their two chief cities, New York and Philadelphia, garrisoned by the enemy; to be challenged by red-coated sentinels as they walked their own streets; and to hold their lives and property subject to the caprice of some British officer sent out to chastise them into submission. As for New England, its people were too mad to be very religious—Puritanism had always a terrible temper when fully





aroused; the South never was very devout; having for the most part nothing but the official forms of godliness; and during those gloomy years the only vigorous life among any body of believers was among the much-abused Methodists, who, though subject to every species of indignity at the hands of magistrates, soldiers, and ruffians, resolutely persisted in preaching the Gospel; which preaching the Lord accompanied with signal displays of his grace.

**Asbury again at the Front.**—During the last half of the war-period Asbury, having outlived the suspicions of the patriots, was permitted to resume his place as the general of the itinerant forces, in which he displayed abilities of the highest order: patience, persistence, indifference to personal sufferings, the power of combination and systematic arrangement, and a consummate judgment of men: just those qualities which the situation demanded in a pioneer Bishop who was called upon to manage a diocese reaching from Jersey to Florida, from the coast to the Alleghanies, and over them; some portions of which were occupied by hostile armies, and the whole of it suffering from the poverty and commotion produced by a long and exasperating civil war.

There is no other hero in America with whom to measure Asbury, except the otherwise incomparable Washington. A careful study of these two leaders will show a striking similarity between them; each pre-eminent in his own field, and each honored above the other according as the individual student of their character and career is moved to give precedence to Church or State, to patriotism or piety.

As soon as it was possible Asbury organized the whole Methodist work into one great circuit, which, with incredible toil and in spite of frequent illness, he compassed once, and sometimes twice, a year. The reader of his Journals is bewildered with the rapidity of his movements; but through them all the tireless, invincible apostle appears, planning grandly and as grandly executing his plans; raising up hosts of preachers; forming new Churches, new Circuits, and new Conferences; extending his denomination to all points of the compass, till it becomes before his death co-extensive with the nation.

He traversed the wilderness of the South and West, sometimes being compelled to use two horses, because no one beast could carry a man all day over the wretched bridle-paths and across the mountain tor-



nts, often incapable of ferriage and almost always wanting a bridge. On one occasion he says:—



“We set out for Crump’s, over rocks, hills, creeks, and pathless woods. The young man with me was heartless before we had traveled a mile: but when he saw how I could bush it, and sometimes force my way through a thicket and make the young saplings bend before me, and twist and turn out of the way or path, for there was no road, he took courage. With great difficulty we came into the settlement about two o’clock, after traveling eight or nine hours; the

people looking almost as wild as the deer in the woods. I have only time to pray, and write in my Journal; always upon the wing; as the rides are so long and the roads so bad, it takes me many hours, for in general I walk my horses.

“I crossed Rocky River about ten miles from Haw River. It was rocky, sure enough. I can see little else but cabins in these parts built with poles. I crossed Deep River in a ferry-boat, and the poor ferry-man swore because I had not a shilling to give him.”

It was just this Herculean labor so sagaciously bestowed that preserved the unity of the scattered Societies. Asbury was every-where. Was there a dispute among the preachers at the South over their rights to administer the sacraments? He was at hand with cautious counsels to prevent an open break with Mr. Wesley. Was a poor itinerant in trouble with the authorities? He was ready with his personal influence to protect him; or with his purse to pay his iniquitous fine. Was there a man posted in an almost inaccessible region among the mountains? He was sure to pay a visit to the outpost and cheer the lonely sentinel with his wise and loving words. Was there a little band of adventurous spirits planting themselves in the wilderness far beyond the lines of the frontier? Asbury was sure to hear of them and to run his ever-extending circuit-lines so as to take them in. His was the mind that planted the Methodist organization in America.



and put and kept it in working order, till, at the close of the war, when other branches of the Church militant were more or less demoralized, his little band of veterans, seasoned with hard campaigning and flushed with constant victory in the name of the Lord, were ready for a fresh and immediate advance all along the line; and it was just this mighty onset, at the time when other Churches were rallying and recruiting, that gave to Methodism the foremost place among the Christian communions of the New World.

At one time, Asbury was driven to take a little rest at the White Sulphur Springs, in Virginia, which even then had begun to be a famous watering-place, and this is the list of his regular duties during this vacation, as reported by a friend who accompanied him:—

“He reads,” says his friend, “about one hundred pages a day; usually prays in public five times a day; preaches in the open air every other day; and lectures in prayer-meeting every evening.” As further evidence of his tireless diligence, it appears that being constantly obliged to make long journeys on horseback through wild and unsettled portions of the country, by way of making the most of his time he took up the study of the Greek and Hebrew languages, and actually learned as he rode the forest paths to read the Scriptures in their original tongues.

**An Ordained Wesleyan Ministry** was now the special demand of the American Methodists, who had, with great difficulty, been prevented from setting up an independent ministry for themselves. The Conference of 1780, held in Baltimore, determined, after much debate, to “continue in close communion with the American section of the English Church,” relying upon the “friendly clergy” thereof for the administration of the sacraments; the Methodists having, as yet, not a single ordained minister among them. But America was now, in 1784, a nation by itself, and the active and growing Societies could not be persuaded to remain in “close communion,” or in any communion whatever, with a Church which was the creature of a foreign and recently hostile State. Something must be done that the fifteen thousand Methodists in America might no longer be defrauded of their rights and privileges as members of the Church of God; and, also, that the eighty itinerant ministers might be permitted to attain



that rank in the Church to which the providence of God had appointed them, and which they had so heroically earned.

During the Revolution the American Methodists had rapidly multiplied. At the Conference of 1784 their numbers were reported at 14,988, with 83 itinerant preachers, besides several hundred local preachers. Like their brethren in England, they had hitherto regarded themselves as in some way related to the English Church, as it was then represented in America. But the "friendly clergy of the Church of England," to whom the Conference had voted to look for the administration of the sacraments, had now nearly all departed for England, and a large number of the Episcopal Churches had perished during the war. In Virginia twenty-three out of ninety-five parishes were extinct or forsaken; and of the remaining seventy-two, thirty-four were destitute of pastors; while of her ninety-eight clergymen, only twenty-eight remained. This, however, was a small misfortune, for the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, himself a clergyman of the Church of England, declares that "most of the clergy preached what was little better than deism," and were bitter revilers and persecutors of those who preached the truth.\*

Under these circumstances the Methodists sought to cut themselves loose from their Churchly leading-strings, and began to demand of their preachers the administration of the sacraments. Many of the Societies had been months, some of them years, without these sacred ordinances. Five years before this, in 1779, the preachers in the South proceeded to ordain themselves by the hands of three of their senior members, unwilling that their people should longer be denied the Lord's Supper, and their children and probationary members the rite of Baptism. Asbury was greatly annoyed at this, and a year afterward with difficulty succeeded in persuading them to suspend the administration of the sacraments till further advice could be received from Wesley. Asbury wrote to Wesley, telling him of the greatness of the work, and of the division that had taken place in Virginia on account of the people's uneasiness respecting the sacraments. Thousands of their children were unbaptized, and the members of the Societies in general had not partaken of the Lord's Supper for many years; some of them never. For these urgent reasons he implored Mr. Wesley to

\* TYRMAN'S "Life and Times of Wesley."



send out an *ordained* minister to America who could supply this painful lack of service.

With the new nation came the necessity for the establishment of a new section of the Church. In this emergency Mr. Wesley, having exhausted his last hope of aid from the English Episcopate, fell back upon the rights which, as he believed, were vested in him by the apostolic constitution, by the constitution of the Church of England, and also by the immediate providence and grace of God; and prepared to set up the form and order of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, as he understood it, for the government and fellowship of his spiritual children in the United States and Canada. Accordingly he ordained Dr. Coke, his most distinguished assistant and his most trusted friend, as "Superintendent of the Methodist Societies in America," and sent him out, thus accredited, to ordain Francis Asbury to a like office, and thus establish the Episcopal form of Church government among the Methodists of the New World.

"Of his power to ordain Wesley had no doubt. Nearly forty years before he had been convinced by 'Lord King's Account of the Primitive Church,' that bishops and presbyters are of one order. In 1756 he wrote: 'I still believe the episcopal form of Church government to agree with the practice and writings of the apostles; but that it is prescribed in Scripture I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's "Irenicon." I think he has unanswerably proved that neither Christ nor his apostles prescribe any particular form of Church government; and that the plea of divine right for diocesan episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive Church.' Again, in 1761, in a letter to a friend, he repeated that Stillingfleet had fully convinced him that to believe that none but episcopal ordination was valid 'was an entire mistake.' And again, in 1780, he shocked the High-church bigotry of his brother by declaring, 'I verily believe I have as good a right to ordain as to administer the Lord's Supper.' " \*

**The Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D.**—Although the life and labors of Dr. Coke enter so largely into the history of British Meth-

\* TIERNAN'S "Life and Times of Wesley," vol. iii, p. 430. His quotations are from Wesley's "Works," vol. vii, octavo edition.



odism, and especially into the history of British Wesleyan missions, yet, as the first Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, his biography belongs, in a special sense, to the history of Methodism in America.

Since his advent among the British Methodists in 1778, Dr. Coke had been, after John Wesley, the most prominent leader among them. He was a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. He was rich and could travel at his own expense; he was a scholar, and would give additional dignity to the little Conference in America; he was a man



*Thomas Coke*  
July 6, 1789.

of great personal power and magnetism; and last, though not least, as Mr. Wesley regarded it, he was a presbyter in the Church of England.

The first meeting between Wesley and Coke occurred at the village of Kingston, near Taunton, in August, 1776, at which date Wesley was a venerable man of seventy-three. Coke was a young presbyter of the Church of England, and curate of the parish of South Petherton. He was already a genuine Methodist, though he had never



attended a Methodist meeting; he was, therefore, prepared to be captivated at once by the spirit and genius of Wesley, to whom, as will shortly be seen, he presently attached himself as a son and helper in the Gospel.

Thomas Coke was born in the village of Brecon, in Wales, on the 9th of September, 1747. His father was an influential gentleman, a surgeon by profession, who was several times Mayor of Brecon; and Thomas, being an only child, the most liberal plans were laid out for his education; which, on the death of his father, were carried out by his excellent mother, who lived to see him become Mr. Wesley's chief assistant, and to become herself a member of the Methodist Society at Bristol.

At the age of sixteen the young man was entered as a gentleman commoner at Jesus College, Oxford. Here he was at first disgusted with the licentiousness which prevailed among the students; but at length his mind became tainted with their infidel notions, and being a lively, handsome young fellow, fond of cards, dancing, and other pleasures of fashionable society, he was far along on the road to ruin before his conscience could bring him to a stand.

At length, in spite of his infidel notions, the faith of his childhood began to torment him with forebodings of the future, which he was not able to shake off. While in this wretched state of mind he paid a visit to a Welsh clergyman, who, when Sunday came, preached a brilliant and powerful sermon, which so affected the young student that on their way home from Church he opened his heart to the minister, praised his discourse, confessed that it had driven him from his refuge of lies, and begged to be further instructed in things pertaining to the kingdom of God; but what was his amazement when the minister laughingly assured him that "it was only a sermon," and that he himself did not believe that kind of doctrine, but preached it simply because it was the thing required of him as a clergyman of an orthodox Church.

The young Oxonian was now in deeper trouble than ever; his struggles between faith and doubt became more and more desperate, till some of the writings of Bishop Sherlock came in his way. These settled his mind in favor of the orthodox views, and led him to forsake his wild companions at college and turn his thoughts to the holy office. But there were more candidates than "livings," and young



Coke, after waiting several years for an eligible opening, during which time he took his Oxford degree of Doctor of Civil Law, was glad to accept the curacy of South Petherton, in Somersetshire, where he soon became unpleasantly distinguished as a zealous country parson.

Hitherto he was a Christian only in doctrine: of the experience of saving grace, like the great majority of the clergy, he knew nothing at all. He believed in the Bible, the Prayer Book, and the Catechism; Fletcher's "Checks to Antinomianism" had cured him of the predestinarian views in which he had been trained at home, and filled his mind and heart with the evangelical doctrines, which he preached with all his might—preached them sometimes without a manuscript, after the manner of the Methodists—preached them from house to house, among the aged and the sick, who could not, and among the indifferent and vicious, who would not, join the crowds who attended his ministry at the parish church. These efforts for the actual salvation of actual sinners made him obnoxious both to the easy-going clergy and the worldly-minded laity of his region of country, among whom he soon began to be denounced as a "Methodist"—a word which, in those days, was synonymous with our word "fanatic," and which was applied to any one who was very much in earnest about spiritual and eternal things, no matter what might be his peculiar doctrinal views.

**Dr. Coke becomes a Methodist.**—In one of the doctor's visits to a friend in Devonshire he discovered a genuine Methodist, the first he had ever seen. He was a simple-hearted man employed on his friend's estate; the leader of a little class; learned in nothing but the Scriptures, and wise only in matters of Christian experience. The two men talked and prayed together a good deal during the doctor's visit, and it was to this godly peasant more than to any other person that Coke declared himself indebted for leading him into the experience of religion. On returning from this visit he preached more like a Methodist than ever, and on one occasion, while speaking in his own pulpit, the power of God came down upon him, filling his soul with unspeakable joy. This blessed experience he announced to his people, and at his first sermon after that happy event three souls were awakened under the word.

The parish was now in a ferment. The genteel portion were offended at his zeal, the impenitent at his severity; while those who



had relied on their outward morality for salvation were disgusted to hear that, without being born again, even they could not enter the kingdom of God. The neighboring clergy were displeased because Dr. Coke drew away their congregations, and the choir of the parish church were wounded in their vanity because the curate had introduced the singing of hymns by the congregation, instead of leaving all the praise and glory of the music to them. The bishop of the diocese was appealed to, to correct this irregular man, but he found nothing in him worthy of punishment. At length his enemies, having no other resort, persuaded the rector of the parish to dismiss his troublesome curate; which was hastily done in public without giving him any notice; and to make his disgrace more terrible the bells of the church were rung as he passed out of the door. But years afterward they rang him in again, when, on a visit to the scene of their disgrace—not his—the rejected curate was hailed as one of the chief Methodists, as well as one of the chief men of his times.

This curacy of three years' duration had cured Dr. Coke of all his high expectations of preferment in the State Church; he had too much religion to hope for large success in that direction. Thus by pressure from without, as well as by drawings from within, he joined himself to Mr. Wesley's band of itinerants, and in 1778 was appointed to the old Foundry, at London. The fame of his talents as well as of his trials had preceded him, and he was received with much joy by the London Society, who soon came to admire him for his marked ability, as well as to love him for his Christly spirit. Wesley hailed him as the strongest re-enforcement he had ever received, and made him his confidential adviser in place of his brother Charles; and from this time forward until his death the name of Doctor, afterward Bishop, Coke is closely interwoven in Methodist history, chiefly in connection with his efforts to carry the Gospel into "foreign parts." He traveled and preached by sea and by land, over the English-speaking world of his day; his restless and heroic spirit never suffering him to be content unless he were planning a missionary crusade or planting the standard of the cross in some position far in advance of the established lines of the Church both at home and abroad.

**Dr. Coke and Methodist Missions.**—For many years the Doctor was a whole missionary society in himself; the earliest and



one of the most efficient that ever existed. This was an office in which to win immortal honor below and eternal glory above, but one which subjected him to no small discourtesy, hardship, criticism, and even abuse. The Church of that day, with the exception of the German Moravians, were sound asleep so far as the duty of foreign missions was concerned; and it was a thankless as well as difficult task to awaken it from its comfortable lethargy. Even in the ranks of the Methodists, missions were by no means so popular as at present,



THE DR. COKE MEMORIAL SCHOOLS, BRECON.

and Dr. Coke was compelled to beg from house to house the funds which his schemes required: a process requiring, at that time, an indescribable amount of patience and courage, and one which made him anything but a popular man. By some good people he was laughed at for intermeddling with divine Providence; by others he was coolly thrust aside as a nuisance; but none of these things moved him or in the least abated his missionary zeal: his time, his fortune, and his



life had, once for all, been laid upon this altar, and God had doubtless accepted the sacrifice. The matter, therefore, was fixed and final.

**A Missionary Wife.**—In the later part of his career Dr. Coke's hands were strengthened and his resources increased in a somewhat romantic manner.

During the year 1805 word was brought to him that there was a wealthy and benevolent lady, Miss Penelope Goulding Smith, staying at the Hot Wells, in Bristol, for her health, and without loss of time he paid her a missionary call. His plans so interested the lady that she promised him a contribution of a hundred guineas if he would call upon her on her return to her home, at Bradford, in Wiltshire; and when in due time he presented himself to collect the subscription the lady gave him two hundred guineas instead of one hundred; so deep an impression had he produced upon her mind.

This was the beginning of a friendship which in the following year ripened into matrimony, whereby the doctor gained an estimable and pious helpmeet, a life-member to his individual missionary society, and an additional fortune to aid him in spreading the Gospel among the heathen at home and abroad.

Previous to her marriage the lady had led a very secluded life, but for the love of her missionary husband, whose work compelled him to spend much of his time on the road, she gave up her quiet mansion for a great traveling carriage, in which this devoted couple may almost be said to have resided for four out of the six years of their wedded life. Having now no fixed dwelling-place, the doctor's choice books and papers were stowed in the carriage; as well as the more strictly personal baggage of the two travelers; and in this four-wheeled office the first Missionary Society transacted its business, planned its campaigns, and kept itself before the public.

The arrival of this compact and somewhat complex expedition at the house of the hospitable Methodists along the Doctor's routes, where he was wont to halt for dinner, supper, or lodgings, was quite a notable event; amusing, indeed, in some of its aspects, though none the less memorable on that account. To unload the ample vehicle of its multifarious contents required the united services of the entire household; a task which nothing but the dignity, heroism, and self-forgetfulness of the distinguished passengers could render very agree-



able. Then the lady was not in firm health, neither was she fond of travel, nor yet of making acquaintance of strangers; thus it was with some considerable embarrassment that this itinerating missionary headquarters made its yearly rounds; while the moneys paid into its treasury were, for a time, more than equalled by those bestowed and expended by the occupant of the office itself.

On the 25th of January, 1811, Mrs. Coke departed from this missionary life, in the forty-ninth year of her age. During her brief and happy wifehood she devoted her fortune, comfort, time, soul, and body to her glorious husband and to the mission on which the Lord had sent him. Cheerfully she endured a life which, to a person of her quiet tastes and retiring disposition, would otherwise have been insufferable: but four years of such vagabond discomfort literally wore out the life of this modest, devoted gentlewoman, and among the list of the noble army of missionary martyrs her name deserves an honorable place.

**Coke's Commentary.**—For a short time after his marriage the good man suffered himself to be domesticated, and spent a quiet year or two on the estates of his wife finishing his Commentary on the Holy Scriptures; a work which he had undertaken at the request of the Conference; he being, at Wesley's death, the only competent scholar among them. From 1790 to 1807 all the time he could spare from his missionary labors he devoted to this work, whose appearance, in numbers, was hailed by the Methodists as one of the wonders of their age. When finished it comprised six quarto volumes; but, being only a secondary work it was only of secondary value, and was wholly superseded by the commentaries of Drs. Clarke and Benson.

**Dr. Coke and the Irish Conference.**—Next in importance to his official relation with the Methodists of America, which will be considered in its place, was Dr. Coke's connection with the Irish Conference. In 1782 Mr. Wesley directed him to convene the Irish preachers at Dublin and to preside, as his representative, over their assembly. So well pleased were they with his management of their affairs, which hitherto had been part and parcel of Mr. Wesley's English Conference work, that they petitioned for his reappointment. For nearly thirty years Dr. Coke presided at the annual sessions of the Irish Conference, and to the force of his character and the wisdom



of his measures the Methodism of Ireland is largely indebted for its present flourishing condition.

**British Wesleyan Home Missions.**—In 1805 Dr. Coke, who had been elected President of the British Wesleyan Conference, astonished that body by bringing forward a scheme for the evangelization of neglected portions of England and Wales. Methodism itself was a grand missionary society, and some of the preachers regarded it as sufficient; but Dr. Coke had traveled over the country and knew it better than any other man in England, and, therefore, he was permitted to inaugurate his plan, especially as he would be obliged to find his own missionaries and gather or furnish his own supplies.

From one of the reports of Dr. Coke, in the capacity of Methodist Home Missionary Secretary, it appeared that in 1808, "out of eleven hundred parishes in England and Wales, perhaps one half of them seldom or never hear the Gospel. In numerous small towns, villages, and hamlets a very considerable part of the inhabitants attend no place of worship whatever." It was in places and among people of this description that the doctor established his home missions, and the work thus inaugurated has grown into a prominent department of British Wesleyanism, under the management of the Committees of the Home Mission and Contingent Fund, and of the Metropolitan Auxiliary and Home Mission Fund; by whom "additional ministers" are employed as Home Missionaries, "that specific attention may be given to the neglected and careless portions of the population of our large towns and rural districts;" and especially in London, whose "appalling moral and social condition demands a much larger share of the practical sympathy of our Connection." \*

**Missions among French Prisoners of War.**—The war with France had resulted in the capture of about seventy thousand French prisoners, who were distributed in barracks and prisonships in different parts of the kingdom. The wretched condition of these men excited the sympathy of Dr. Coke, who, at the Conference of 1811, proposed a system of missions among them. The Conference admitted the excellence of the design, but excused itself on account of the lack of funds. This objection Coke overruled by pledging the entire expense of the mission from his own private fortune;

\* PRINCE'S "Ecclesiastical Principles and Polity of the Wesleyan Methodists." Edition of 1873.



and having a number of men at command who could preach in the French language, the work was at once commenced.

These missionaries were well received by the captive Frenchmen, who thus gained a knowledge of divine truth which was quite out of the usual line of a soldier's acquirements. Bibles were also distributed among them, and when these favored prisoners were exchanged, they carried home with them quite a different idea of English religion from that which most Frenchmen held, and of which their views were not the most favorable, being learned by the thrusts of British bayonets or out of the muzzles of British muskets and cannon.

**Dr. Coke's Last Mission** was organized on a magnificent scale. In the year 1811 he married, and soon after buried, another wife, Miss Ann Loxdale, an eminent Methodist lady of Liverpool; and being again alone in the world, his heart now turned toward a far-away country of which for years he had made frequent inquiry as a field of missionary operations.

Under date of Dublin, June 29, 1813, he writes: "I am now dead to Europe and alive for India. God himself has said to me, 'Go to Ceylon.' I shall bear my own expenses, of course. I am studying the Portuguese language continually, and am perfectly certain I shall conquer it before I land in Ceylon."

As usual, Dr. Coke laid his plans before the Wesleyan Conference, under whose auspices his work was all performed. It was nothing less than the establishment of a system of missions in the very ends of the earth; that is to say, in the East Indies, and at the Cape of Good Hope; from which, as centers of operations, he designed to evangelize South Africa, India, and the entire system of British colonies in the islands of the Indian Ocean.

"Where are the immense amounts of money to be raised to carry out this splendid scheme?" asked the Wesleyan Conference in amazement.

"I will advance the money myself to the extent of six thousand pounds," answered Dr. Coke.

Such munificence roused the spirits of his brethren, and when it was announced that the doctor proposed to lead the expedition in person, the Conference was all ablaze. They could not bear to lose such a man, but they now began to realize that he was larger than any one



country and belonged to all mankind ; they, therefore, made arrangements to take care of the home work, which he must now place wholly in their hands ; and with prayers and tears, and a goodly sum of money to lighten the heavy draft on his private purse, they sent him forth in the name of the Lord and of British Methodism to set up the standard of the cross on the other side of the world.

On the first of January, 1814, a fleet of thirty-three merchantmen, under convoy of four ships of the Royal Navy, set sail for the embryo empire then controlled by the East India Company ; having among their passengers the Missionary Bishop, Thomas Coke, and nine other brave-hearted Methodists, who had caught his heroic spirit and devoted their lives to the carrying out of his grand design.

But the leader was destined to land on fairer shores and in sunnier climes than those for which he sailed. On the morning of the 3d of May, 1814, his servant, on going to awaken his master, found his lifeless body lying on the floor of his cabin, where he had fallen in a fit of apoplexy ; and on the evening of the same day all that was mortal of Thomas Coke was buried in the Indian Ocean.

And what tomb could have been more appropriate ? This man, whose heart was great enough to love and to labor for all lands, deserved to have a grave as spacious as the sea.



Before taking up the work of Bishop Coke in America it will be well to follow a little further the fortunes of his bereaved band.

Although their chief had been taken away, the little band of mis-



sionaries had nothing to do but continue their voyage. On their arrival at their destination the officers of the East India Company, at Bombay, gave them every assistance, not only for their personal comfort but for the prosecution of their plans; and at the service which they held on the first Sunday after their landing, Lord Molesworth, the military commander of the station, and a native of European descent, Mr. Salmon, were happily converted to God; who thus by his Spirit bore witness to the heavenly mission on which these his servants had been sent.

The sequel of Lord Molesworth's history is worth relating. Shortly after his conversion he sailed from India on the ill-fated transport, the "Arniston," which was wrecked off the coast of South Africa, and all on board, except two or three, found a watery grave. One of the survivors reported the fact that as the ship was going down Lord Molesworth was busy walking up and down the deck pointing the helpless soldiers, passengers, and seamen to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;" and at the last moment taking his wife in his arms, they went down together, and their bodies were afterward washed ashore locked in each other's embrace.

The tidings of the death of Dr. Coke were received in England with unspeakable grief. A series of memorial meetings were held, which, besides giving expression to sentiments of love and sorrow, led to the formation of The Wesleyan Missionary Society, which, under the leadership of Jabez Bunting, carried out the grand designs of Dr. Coke in India, and which from that day to this, under the management of the clearest heads and largest hearts of the British Wesleyan Connection, has carried forward the blessed work of evangelizing the world.

**Whatcoat and Vasey.**—It would be difficult to imagine a more suitable choice than that of the man chosen by Mr. Wesley to be his envoy to the American Methodists, and to transfer to them the ministerial succession. With him he also sent Mr. Richard Whatcoat and Mr. Thomas Vasey; the first of whom is described as "one of the saintliest men in the primitive itinerancy of Methodism. Had he been a papist he might have been canonized."

**Richard Whatcoat** was born in the parish of Gloucestershire, England, on the 23d of February, 1736. He was early the subject of



religious impressions, and in his twenty-second year he experienced the power of regenerating grace. His conversion was one of those sudden and glorious transitions from darkness to light, from nature to grace, which especially distinguished the early history of Methodism; and about three years afterward he received another special baptism of the Holy Spirit, under the instructions of Mr. Mather, afterward Bishop Mather.

Of this experience he says: "On the 28th of March, 1761, my soul



BISHOP WHATCOAT.

was drawn out and engaged in a manner it never was before. Suddenly I was stripped of all but love. Now all was love, and prayer, and praise; and in this happy state, rejoicing evermore, and in every thing giving thanks, I continued for some years with little intermission or abatement, wanting nothing for soul or body more than I received from day to day."

For eight or nine years he labored as a class-leader in Wednesbury, Staffordshire, that portion of the "Black Country" in which, as has been seen, the Methodists suffered such fearful persecutions;



and in 1769, at the Leeds Conference, he was proposed and accepted as an itinerant preacher; in which work he was greatly blessed on circuits in England, Ireland, and Wales.

It was the desire of Dr. Coke that Whatcoat should accompany him to America; and Shadford, who was familiar with the work in that country, urged him to consent. But lest he should go on a warfare of his own choice Whatcoat observed a day of fasting and prayer for divine guidance, and under what he believed to be the special direction of the Spirit of God he offered himself for this distant service across the sea.

In 1787 Mr. Wesley desired his ordination as superintendent in America, but the Conference, fearful lest in that case Mr. Wesley might recall Bishop Asbury, refused to elect him, and without this election, according to the precedent established by Bishop Asbury, he could not be ordained as bishop. But at the General Conference of 1800 the health of Bishop Asbury was so much impaired in consequence of his privations and labors that he desired the appointment of another bishop, and the choice fell upon Whatcoat; his chief competitor being the apostle of New England Methodism, Jesse Lee. In private life he was remarkable for his entire devotion to God; as a preacher his discourses were plain, instructive, and highly spiritual; as a presiding officer he combined simplicity and dignity. Laban Clark, one of his great contemporaries, says of him, "I think I may safely say, if ever I knew one who came up to St. James's description of a perfect man—one who bridled his tongue and kept in subjection his whole body—that man was Richard Whatcoat."

**Thomas Vasey** was a man who had been reared amid the advantages of wealth, being the adopted heir of a wealthy uncle who was a rigid Churchman, and who was greatly indignant at finding his nephew had been converted among the Methodists. The young man was straightly threatened by the loss of all his expected inheritance if he should join the Wesleyan Society; but he preferred to suffer hardness with the people of God, deliberately sacrificed all the advantages of his position, and in 1775 entered the ranks of the Methodist itinerancy; in which he had traveled about nine years when he was chosen by Mr. Wesley as one of the companions of Dr. Coke on his episcopal mission to America.



Vasey makes but a small figure in the history of American Methodism; for, after laboring in this country about two years, he was induced to accept an ordination from Bishop White, of Philadelphia, a representative of the English Church, and soon after this he returned to England. He was, however, illy satisfied with his curacy in the Established Church; and re-entered the Methodist itinerancy, in 1789, in which, with much zeal and success, he labored during the twenty-two following years. Bending under infirmities, he retired in 1826, and his death occurred at Leeds on the 27th of December in that year.

**Rev. James Creighton.**—The Rev. James Creighton, A.B., whom Mr. Wesley called to his assistance in ordaining Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey for America, was a native of Cavan, the chief town in the county of Cavan, in the northern province of Ulster, Ireland; a student of Dublin University, and a Presbyterian in the English Church, which at that time had a feeble representation in Ireland.

Bishop Kilmore, by whom he was ordained, appointed him curate at his cathedral, with strict injunction to "say nothing about faith" in his sermons. But the young man was wiser than his Bishop. He had read the writings of Wesley and Fletcher, which had led him into evangelical views; and from a Methodist itinerant, preaching in a barn, he had heard a sermon which was the means of leading him to Christ, through faith in whom he found pardon and peace.

In the early days of his Christian experience, having no friend at hand to counsel him, he wrote letters to several ministers of his acquaintance; but, instead of offering him sympathy and assistance, they turned away from him as if he "were infected with a plague;" for among the ministry of the Irish Episcopal Church of that day personal faith in Christ for present salvation, and the profession of experimental religion, were regarded as the wildest fanaticism, but little removed from insanity.

He soon commenced preaching in private houses, barns, ancient ruins, and in any place where he could gather a congregation, and conversions began to occur under his ministry. This brought out a remonstrance from his fellow-clergymen, who charged him with that great crime, "irregularity." But Creighton replied: "I never saw any fruits of my labor till I became irregular," and still went on with his



work. Without any direct relations with the Methodists he actually became one himself, traveling a circuit of his own, and gathering his converts into societies, in true Wesleyan fashion. The presence of the Lord among the people was evidenced by a large increase in the attendance at the churches; but there was so much Methodism about the movement that the clergy bitterly opposed it, preferring that their churches should remain half empty rather than that they should be filled with persons who believed in "conversion."

Among the converts were some papists, whose apostasy from the Romish Church so enraged the priests that Creighton was in great danger of his life; and his brother, who was a leader of one of the classes, was waylaid with the intention to murder him. But having received intelligence of it, he escaped his would-be murderers by taking another road. In 1781-2 Creighton extended his labors through seven of the central counties of the island in the provinces of Ulster and Leinster, during which he walked or rode about four thousand miles.

Wesley, who doubtless heard of his labors in some of his Irish tours, invited him to London in 1783; and, after a second invitation, he "consented to go in the strength of the Most High." During the fourteen years of his pastorate in Cavan, the community had been visibly as well as spiritually reformed, and his leave-taking of his parishioners, many of whom had been saved through his ministry, was very tender and affecting. Like all the regular clergy who joined the ranks of the itinerants, Creighton was received at once by Mr. Wesley into full membership in the Conference. He preached at City Road, administered the sacraments to the Societies in London and in the neighboring counties, and assisted Mr. Wesley in editing his "Arminian Magazine." On the 1st of September, 1784, John Wesley, according to the custom of the English Church, assisted by the Rev. Thomas Coke and the above-named Rev. James Creighton, ordained Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey as deacons, and on the following day as presbyters or elders. For the remainder of his life he was a steadfast Methodist, and shared in most if not all the ordinations performed by Mr. Wesley. His death occurred in 1820, in the 83d year of his age.\*

\* SANDFORD'S "Memoirs."



This was all quite regular and correct, according to the principles which Mr. Wesley had repeatedly set forth; but, in addition to this, he performed a separate act of consecration upon Dr. Coke, as "Superintendent of the Methodist Societies in America," which office Coke was to convey to Asbury; and Coke and Asbury were to be "joint Superintendents of all the brethren in America."

**Credentials of "Superintendent" Coke.**—The following were the credentials given to Dr. Coke by Mr. Wesley:—

To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late Fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford, Presbyter of the Church of England, sendeth greeting:—

Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, according to the usage of the same Church; and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers:

Know all men, that I, John Wesley, think myself to be providentially called, at this time, to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And, therefore, under the protection of almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a superintendent, by the imposition of my hands, and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained ministers,) Thomas Coke, doctor of civil law, a presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

JOHN WESLEY.

BRISTOL, September 10, 1784.

*To Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our Brethren in North America.*

By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from the mother country, and erected into independent States. The English Government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the States of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the Provincial Assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation, some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice, and, in compliance with their desire, I have drawn up a little sketch.

Lord King's account of the primitive Church convinced me, many years ago, that Bishops and Presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the



same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right by ordaining part of our traveling preachers. But I have still refused; not only for peace sake, but because I was determined, as little as possible, to violate the established order of the national Church to which I belonged.

But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are Bishops, who have a legal jurisdiction; in America there are none, neither any parish minister; so that, for some hundreds of miles together, there is none either to baptize, or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's rights, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint Superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England, (I think the best constituted national Church in the world,) which I advise all the traveling preachers to use on the Lord's Day, in all the congregations, reading the litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord's Day.

If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding these poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

It has, indeed, been proposed to desire the English Bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object: (1.) I desired the Bishop of London to ordain one, but could not prevail. (2.) If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceedings; but the matter admits of no delay. (3.) If they would ordain them now, they would expect to govern them; and how grievously would this entangle us! (4.) As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the State and the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty, simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely set them free.

JOHN WESLEY.

**The Validity of Methodist Episcopacy.**—The consecration of Dr. Coke as "Superintendent," when he was already a Presbyterian, and as such the clerical equal of Mr. Wesley himself, has been the occasion of no small controversy, which it may be proper here to briefly review. If the word "episcopal" is to have a place in



the name of the chief body of Methodists in America, it would seem to be of some interest and importance to the ministry and membership of that body to know exactly what the word is there intended to mean, and what are the grounds for giving it such definition. The validity of the Episcopacy of American Methodism has been freely and frequently challenged; and a brief statement of facts, and a brief demurrer from the views set forth in the last, largest, and otherwise the best biography of John Wesley, may properly have place in this volume.

John Wesley was not a Bishop of the Church of England, but he was a Presbyterian providentially called to an extraordinary but legitimate ordaining act; and in this latter capacity he conferred episcopal authority on Dr. Coke, under what was doubtless an "exigency of necessity," as Hooker calls it. This high authority on ecclesiastical order says:—

"There may be sometimes very just and sufficient reasons to allow ordination without a Bishop. *The whole Church visible being the true original subject of all power*, it hath not ordinarily allowed any other than Bishops alone to ordain. Howbeit, as the ordinary cause is ordinarily in all things to be observed, so it may be in some cases not unnecessary that we decline from the ordinary ways. Men may be extraordinarily yet allowably two ways admitted into spiritual functions in the Church. One is when God himself doth of himself raise up a way; another, when the exigency of necessity doth constrain to leave the usual ways of the Church, which otherwise we would willingly keep."—*Ecclesiastical Polity*, vii, 14.

Again: "Let them [the Bishops] continually bear in mind that it is rather the force of custom whereby the Church, having so long found it good to continue the regiment of her virtuous Bishops, doth still uphold, maintain, and honor them in that respect than that any true and heavenly law can be showed by the evidence whereof it may of a truth appear that the Lord himself hath appointed Presbyters forever to be under the regiment of Bishops."—*Ibid.*, vii, 5.

These are the identical grounds on which Wesley, in his credentials to Dr. Coke, claims authority to set apart a Superintendent and ordain Presbyters for the establishment of a Church with an Episcopal form and order among the Methodists of America, and these also are the grounds on which that Church, in its book of Discipline, still maintains and regulates its Episcopacy.

On this subject, Rev. Dr. Whedon, the official Book Editor, says:\*

\* No quotation marks are here used, this admirable *resumé* of the subject having been prepared by Dr. Whedon especially for this volume.



In complete accordance with this doctrine of this great standard author, "the judicious Hooker," did Wesley establish, intentionally and truly, the Episcopacy of American Methodism. For,

First, He was a Presbyter of the Church of England, a grade of ministry in which the right to ordain inheres, although ordination by an elder is not by the "Church visible" "ordinarily allowed." The only question, then, is, whether that "exigency of necessity" existed calling for an extraordinary ordination by a Presbyter in this case of Wesley.

Second, This extraordinary call did exist in more ways than one. *First*, There existed a great people, the substance and material of an inchoate Church, founded by this Wesley himself, demanding from his hand a form of government. For four years Wesley declined to obey that demand and furnish the organizing act; by which delay the people were left without polity and without the sacraments of Christ. *Second*, The Bishops of the Church of England entirely neglected Wesley's request for an ordination by their hands. And even if they were willing, there was great danger that their hand would in fact repress the great work. The very safety and continued existence of this revival, and the continuance of this people, required that he who, under providence, founded their order, should shape their form and guide their movements in accordance with their past history. *Third*, As there was thus an external call and exigent "necessity," so there doubtless was a divine call; not miraculous, but by movement of the blessed Spirit to this work; and so Wesley himself in his episcopal diploma to Coke declared: "I, John Wesley, think myself providentially CALLED at this time to set apart," etc. "And, therefore, under protection of Almighty God, I have this day set apart," etc. *Fourth*, And hereby is precluded all irregular and uncalled-for ordinations by Presbyters who have no such "exigency" to show for their act. Wesley said, in 1755, "It is not clear to us that *Presbyters, so circumstanced as we are*, may appoint or ordain others," since the providential call had not then come; nor can it be inferred from all this that our polity is properly *presbyterial*; for though the fountain of the ordaining power is in the Church and Presbytery, yet the presbyterial act of ordaining is extraordinary, and with design of preserving the Episcopate. If all the Bishops were dead, the elders would ordain new and proper Bishops; and if both elders and Bishops were dead, the people would rightfully ordain new ones.

From all this it follows, that in strict churchly order, on the principle stated by Hooker, Wesley's ordination was legitimate, and no Episcopal Church has a right to reject its Episcopacy. It is, in fact, an emancipation of the Episcopacy from all despotic successional trammels, and the restoration of the free and voluntary Episcopacy of the primitive Church. And as our Church was organized before either the Roman or the Anglican ordinations in this country, so we were the first regularly established Episcopal Church in America.

It is true that in 1794, within a twelvemonth of his death, Coke





wrote a letter to Wilberforce saying he was willing to return most fully into the bosom of the Established Church on condition that his Royal Highness the Prince Regent and the Government would appoint him their Bishop in India; which fact is quoted by Mr. Tyerman as evidence against the validity of Coke's Episcopal consecration by John Wesley. But the fact has no such bearing upon the case. The success of Bishop Coke's final missionary scheme doubtless seemed to him at that time to require the co-operation of the Established Church of England. Hitherto he had been supported only by the Wesleyans; and it is an evidence of his great catholicity of spirit, as well as of his sagacity, that he was willing to receive a confirmatory sanction from the English Church, which did not at all invalidate his Wesleyan episcopate.

This letter has also been cited as evidence of the personal ambition of Bishop Coke, which unworthy motive his life-long labors and self-sacrifices sufficiently disprove.

Mr. Tyerman further says: "These are unpleasant facts, which we would rather have consigned to oblivion had they not been necessary to vindicate Wesley from the huge inconsistency of ordaining a co-equal presbyter to be a bishop. Wesley meant the ceremony to be a mere formality likely to recommend his delegate to the favor of the Methodists in America: Coke, in his ambition, wished and intended it to be considered as an ordination to a bishopric."

To this evident error concerning Mr. Wesley's intention there are two effectual replies:—

*First.* Dr. Coke, being a presbyter, was solemnly "set apart," or consecrated, by Wesley as "Superintendent;" a proceeding which would be highly discreditable to both parties if it were intended as "a mere formality," that is to say, an imposition upon the American Methodists. This act was performed avowedly for the purpose of establishing an episcopal form of Church government for the Methodists in America; and how could such a form of Church government be based on "a mere formality likely to recommend his delegate to the favor," etc.?

Wesley also sent to the American Church three distinct forms for constituting three classes of ministers which the Church has essentially retained to the present day; the *status* of each of the three classes being indicated in the Methodist Discipline by the word



"ordination" as the name for the service of constituting deacons and elders, and by the use of the word "consecration" as the name of the service whereby certain elders are "set apart" as superintendents or bishops. These forms demonstrate the intention of Wesley to establish a perpetual episcopal form of government; and if he thus sent authority for others to set apart men for an essentially episcopal office, how can it be doubted that he himself intended thus to consecrate Dr. Coke?

*Second.* The fact that Bishop Coke afterward sought other ordination has nothing to do with the question of what were Wesley's intentions in setting him apart as Superintendent for America.

If Coke and Asbury had been content with Wesley's title of "Superintendent," it would have saved Mr. Wesley no little trouble; but to their English ears there was a charm about the word "Bishop," though they well knew it meant nothing more than the word which their father in the Gospel had used in setting them apart for the Episcopal office in America. They, therefore, claimed the more dignified appellation; and, not to be unmindful of their venerable chief, they set him down also as a "Bishop" in the Minutes of the American Methodists for 1784, which Minutes were printed in, and published from, Mr. Wesley's book room in London.

Mr. Wesley's letter to Asbury, in 1788, is also cited by Mr. Tyerman as evidence that Wesley did not intend to make a Bishop of Dr. Coke. In that year Mr. Wesley writes:—

But in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the doctor and you differ from me. I study to be little; you study to be great. I creep; you strut along. I found a school; you a college! nay, and call it after your own names! O, beware; do not seek to be something! Let me be nothing, and "Christ be all in all!"

One instance of this your greatness has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called Bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me Bishop! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better.

Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart. And let this, when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely I am your affectionate friend and brother.

JOHN WESLEY.



The sense of this letter appears on the face of it. Wesley does not say, *I am not* a Bishop; but he says, "Men shall never, by my consent, *call* me a Bishop;" and this same self-sacrifice and humility he urges upon his "dear Franky." For decade after decade he wielded Episcopal powers, except in the single matter of performing ordinations; and at last, when it became needful, he solemnly ordained two men for America, on whom he conferred the orders of deacon and presbyter; and the other, being already a presbyter, he consecrated, and authorized to do every thing in America which he himself was doing in England, though the much-abused title of "Bishop" he, for reasons of policy, refrained from using. There is, then, no difficulty in understanding that John Wesley intended to do precisely what he did do, namely, to confer on Dr. Coke an additional office to that of presbyter; which, by whatever name it may be called, was a proper and historic bishopric; and this, beyond all contradiction, his providential position enabled him rightfully to do. Whoever doubts this, let him read again Wesley's Letters Credential "to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our brethren in North America."

There is also another view of the case which commends itself to all Episcopalians, whether they be Protestant, Methodist, or Reformed, viz.: Anglican Episcopacy was, in Wesley's day, so mingled with dogmatism and muddled with politics that it stood in perishing need of a re-enforcement fresh from heaven, and a restoration to apostolic methods and spirit. Just this re-enforcement and restoration was given through the grace of God committed in pentecostal measure to John Wesley; who, if his apostolic character may be judged by the mighty works which showed themselves forth in him, was the most truly apostolic Bishop ever seen in Great Britain; from whom, through Bishop Coke, the great apostle of Christian missions in modern times, the episcopal line of the Methodists descends.





LOVELY LANE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, BALTIMORE.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

ON the 18th of September, 1784, Bishop Coke and Elders Whatecoat and Vasey set sail for America, and on the 3d of November landed at New York, where they were heartily welcomed by John Dickens, preacher of the New York Society.

"By some means or other," writes Dr. Coke, "the whole country has been, as it were, expecting, and Mr. Asbury looking out for me for some time." On the night of his arrival Coke preached in Wesley Chapel—"old John-street;" and from New York rode to Philadelphia, where, after holding service at the Methodist Churches, and at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, he proceeded southward, and on Sunday, the 14th of November, arrived at Barratt's Chapel, where, he says, "in the midst of a forest I had an honorable congregation, to whom I endeavored to set forth the Redeemer as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. After the sermon a plain, robust man came up to me in the pulpit and kissed me. I thought it



could be no other than Mr. Asbury ; and I was not deceived. I administered the sacrament, after preaching, to five or six hundred communicants, and held a love-feast. It was the best season I ever knew, except one in Charlemont, in Ireland."

After making known his mission to Mr. Asbury, it was determined to call a Conference, at Baltimore, of all the Methodist preachers, on the ensuing Christmas-eve, and Freeborn Garrettson, whom Coke describes as "an excellent young man, all meekness, love, and activity," was intrusted with the, by no means easy, task of bringing the preachers together.

As something more than a month must elapse before the session of the Christmas Conference, Mr. Asbury drew up a route of travel for Bishop Coke, who accordingly made a journey of about a thousand miles, visiting the Societies, preaching, baptizing, and celebrating the supper of the Lord. His coming was hailed with joy by the people, whose hearts had hungered for the sacraments of the Church, and who mourned that their children were growing up unbaptized. These, in great numbers, they now brought to receive the holy ordinance at the hands of the new Bishop, and day after day and night after night witnessed the gathering of glad disciples to celebrate the Holy Eucharist.

**Black Harry.**—Harry Hosier, Asbury's negro servant, who accompanied him in his travels, was directed to accompany Bishop Coke in this his first Episcopal tour. He was, himself, no mean specimen of a Methodist preacher. He was small in stature, perfectly black, and unable to read ; nevertheless, he was by some pronounced the greatest Methodist preacher in America. At different times he acted as driver for the carriage of Asbury, Coke, Whatcoat, and Garrettson ; but he excelled all his masters in popularity as a preacher ; sharing with them in their public services not only in the black, but also in the white, congregations. Lednum, in his history, relates that on a certain occasion at Wilmington, Delaware, where Methodism had not yet become popular, a number of the citizens who had but a moderate opinion of the body came to hear Bishop Asbury. Old Asbury Chapel was, at the time, so full that they could not get in, and they stood outside to hear the Bishop's sermon ; which, at its close, they complimented highly, saying, "If all Methodist preachers could preach like the Bishop, we should like to be constant hearers."



"That was not the Bishop, but the Bishop's servant," was the reply ; for, on this occasion, as was frequently the case, the servant had taken the master's place in the pulpit. This only raised Asbury higher in their estimation ; for, if the servant were such a preacher, what must the master be ?

Asbury acknowledged that the best way to obtain a large congregation was to announce that Harry would preach. But alas ! popularity came near spoiling the poor fellow ; for, what with high compliments



MANWOOD COTTAGE, HANDSWORTH, STAFFORDSHIRE, ENGLAND.

In which Asbury commenced his Itinerant Ministry.

and lavish hospitality he became temporarily a victim of intemperance ; but, by the help of divine grace he struggled manfully with his temptations, was restored to the divine favor, resumed his public labors, and died in the faith, at Philadelphia, about the year 1810 ; his body being borne to the grave by a great procession of admirers, both black and white.

Of his companion on this tour, Bishop Coke writes, under date of



November 29: "I have now had the pleasure of hearing Harry preach several times. I sometimes give notice, immediately after preaching, that in a little time he will preach to the blacks; but the whites always stay to hear him. I really believe that he is one of the best preachers in the world—there is such an amazing power attends his word, though he cannot read; and he is one of the humblest creatures I ever saw."

Coke, as might have been expected, was delighted with his American brethren; especially with Asbury, in whose presence he declared he felt himself a child, and whom he describes as the most apostolic man he ever saw, except Mr. Wesley. The fine education and superior attainments of the Doctor did not appear to raise him in his own estimation above his brethren who had been less favored in their opportunities for culture, but who were heroes in their way; and the most diffident and retiring among them were soon perfectly at ease in his company. Vast multitudes attended his ministry; the chapels were overflowing; and frequently it was necessary for him to come down from the pulpit and address the congregation from the chapel steps. The whole peninsula of Maryland was moved; and the power of the Lord gloriously attended the administration of his sacraments, and the preaching of his word. While waiting for the appointed 24th of December, Whatecoat and Vasey also were having a taste of the new mission which was opening before them.

**The Christmas Conference.**—On the 17th of December, all the episcopal party, except Whatcoat, arrived at Perry Hall, which Coke describes as the "most elegant house in this State;" while Black, who opportunely arrived from Nova Scotia to take part in the approaching convocation, describes it as "the most spacious and elegant building I have seen in America." In this hospitable Methodist mansion the preliminaries of the approaching Conference were arranged, and on Friday the 24th of December, 1784, the little company rode forth from Perry Hall to Baltimore, about eighteen miles distant, and at ten o'clock in the morning opened the first American General Conference in the Lovely Lane Church.

Garrettson had sped his way over twelve hundred miles in six weeks, summoning the itinerants to the Conference; preaching as he went; and on his return found sixty out of the eighty-one ministers



present. Bishop Coke, on taking the chair presented his Letters Credential, and, in accordance with Mr. Wesley's design, "it was agreed," says Asbury, "to form ourselves into an Episcopal Church, and to have superintendents, elders, and deacons."

#### **Election and Consecration of Bishop Asbury.—**

Mr. Asbury declined to accept the Superintendency on Mr. Wesley's appointment unless, in addition thereto, his brethren should elect him to that office; whereupon both Asbury and Coke were unanimously elected, and on the second day of the session Asbury was ordained deacon by Dr. Coke, assisted by Elders Whatcoat and Vasey. On the third day, which was Sunday, Asbury was ordained elder, and on Monday he was consecrated as Superintendent by Bishop Coke, his friend Otterbein, of the German Reform Church, and the elders assisting in the solemn service. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday were spent in enacting rules of discipline and the election of preachers to orders. It was agreed that the Liturgy which had been prepared by Mr. Wesley for the use of the American Church should be read in the congregations; and that the sacraments and ordinations should be celebrated according to the Episcopal form. On Friday several deacons were ordained, and on Sunday, the second day of January, 1785, twelve elders were ordained, who had been previously ordained as deacons, and the Conference ended "in great peace and unanimity."

It is worthy of note that Mr. Wesley's plan for the Methodist Episcopal Church was adopted by the Christmas Conference without a dissenting voice; and as no essential change in its construction has since been made, it is unquestionably true, as stated by Bishop Simpson in his reply to Dean Stanley, on the occasion of the reception of the latter at St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, New York: that "there is no other organization or communion on earth which so clearly and distinctly represents the mind of John Wesley as the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The roll of this Conference is not preserved, but the following are known to have been present: Thomas Coke, LL.D., Francis Asbury, Richard Whatcoat, Thomas Vasey, Freeborn Garrettson, William Gill, Reuben Ellis, Le Roy Cole, Richard Ivey, James O'Kelly, John Haggerty, Nelson Reed, James O. Cromwell, Jeremiah Lambert, John



Dickins, William Glendenning, Francis Poythress, Joseph Everett, William Black, of N. S., William Phœbus, and Thomas Ware. It has been supposed, from their standing and the proximity of their circuits, that the following also were in attendance : Edward Dromgoole, Caleb B. Pedicord, Thomas S. Chew, Joseph Cromwell, John Major, Philip Cox, Samuel Rowe, William Partridge, Thomas Foster, George Mair, Samuel Dudley, Adam Cloud, Michael Ellis, James White, Jonathan Forrest, Joseph Wyatt, Philip Bruce, John Magary, William Thomas, John Baldwin, Woolman Hickson, Thomas Haskins, Ira Ellis, John Easter, Peter Moriarty, Enoch Matson, Lemuel Green, Thomas Curtiss, William Jessup, Wilson Lee, Thomas Jackson, James Riggins, William Ringold, Isaac Smith, Matthew Greentree, William Lynch, Thomas Bowen, Moses Park, William Cannon, and Richard Swift. This would make up the full number—sixty—known to have responded to the summons.

Of the personal appearance and character of this Conference nothing arrested the attention of Dr. Coke more than the generally youthful aspect of the preachers; "though most of them," he says, "bore marks of severe toil and hard usage." Some of them had suffered imprisonment for conscience' sake, others had been victims of mobs, and all of them had earned the title of "good soldiers of Jesus Christ."

The elders ordained were as follows : John Tunnell, William Gill, Le Roy Cole, Nelson Reed, John Haggerty, Reuben Ellis, Richard Ivey, Henry Willis, James O'Kelly, and Beverly Allen. Tunnell, Willis, and Allen were not present, but received ordination after the session. John Dickins, Ignatius Pigman, and Caleb Boyer were chosen deacons. Jeremiah Lambert was ordained elder to serve in the West India island of Antigua, where Bishop Coke had a flourishing mission; and James O. Cromwell and Freeborn Garrettson were ordained elders for the Nova Scotia work.

The fact that Bishop Asbury allowed such a man as Freeborn Garrettson to be captured by his Nova Scotia brother, Black, shows that in spite of the War of the Revolution the Methodism of North America was still substantially a unit, since it is incredible on any other supposition that Garrettson should have been spared to the British Provinces.



**The Methodist Discipline.**—Until the time of the Christmas Conference the “Wesleyan Minutes” had been recognized as the law of the American Societies. In the preliminary deliberations at Perry Hall that code was revised and adapted to the new form of the American Church, and this revision, having been adopted by the Christmas Conference, was incorporated with Mr. Wesley’s revised edition of the “Liturgy,” which he called the “Sunday Service,” and was published in 1785 as the “Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church.”

The Liturgy was used for a few years in the principal Churches, but Sabbath love-feasts and other extra services frequently crowded it out, and from being frequently omitted it at last fell into entire disuse; there being no allusion to it in the records later than 1792. Gowns and bands were also used for a time by the bishops and elders, but these in like manner passed away.

Among the noteworthy provisions of this first Discipline are the following:—

**Q. 2.** What can be done to further the future union of the Methodists?

**A.** During the life of the Rev. Mr. Wesley we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the Gospel, ready in matters applying to Church government to obey his commands. And we do engage, after his death, to do every thing that we judge consistent with the cause of religion in America, and the political interests of these States, to preserve and promote our union with the Methodists in Europe.

**Q. 16.** How shall we prevent improper persons from insinuating into the Society?

**A.** Give tickets to none till they are recommended by a leader, with whom they have met at least two months on trial. Give them the rules the first time they meet. [See that this be never neglected.]

**Q. 18.** Should we insist on the rules concerning dress?

**A.** By all means. Allow no exempt case, not even of a married woman. Give no ticket to any that wear high heads, enormous bonnets, ruffles, or rings.

**Q. 23.** May our ministers or traveling preachers drink spirituous liquors?

**A.** By no means, unless it be medicinally.

**Q. 26.** What is the office of a Superintendent?

**A.** To ordain Superintendents, Elders, and Deacons; to preside as Moderator in our Conferences; to fix the appointments of the preachers for the several circuits; and, in the intervals of the Conference, to change, receive, or suspend preachers as necessity may require, and to receive appeals from the preachers and people, and decide them.



**Q. 27.** To whom is the Superintendent amenable for his conduct ?

**A.** To the Conference.

**Q. 29.** If by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there be no Superintendent remaining in our Church, what shall we do ?

**A.** The Conference shall elect a Superintendent, and the Elders, or any three of them, shall ordain him according to our Liturgy.

**Q. 32.** What is the office of a helper ?

**A.** In the absence of the minister to feed and guide the flock.

\* \* \* \* \*

**N. B.**—No helper, or even Deacon, shall on any pretense at any time administer the Lord's Supper.

**Q. 34.** Will it be expedient to appoint some of our helpers to read the morning and evening service out of our Liturgy on the Lord's day ?

**A.** It will.

**Q. 37.** What shall be the regular annual salary of the Elders, Deacons, and helpers ?

**A.** Twenty-four pounds, Pennsylvania currency, and no more. [The Pennsylvania "pound" was equal to \$2 60.]

**Q. 38.** What shall be annually allowed the wives of the married preachers ?

**A.** Twenty-four pounds, Pennsylvania currency, if they need it, and no more.

**Q. 40.** What shall be allowed the married preachers for the support of their children ?

**A.** For each of their children under the age of six years let them be allowed six pounds, (Pennsylvania currency;) and for each child of the age of six and under the age of eleven, eight pounds.

**Q. 41.** Are there any directions to be given concerning the negroes ?

**A.** Let every preacher, as often as possible, meet them in class, and let the assistant always appoint a proper white person as their leader.

### On Slavery.

**Q. 42.** What methods can we take to extirpate slavery ?

**A.** We are deeply conscious of the impropriety of making new terms of communion for a religious society already established, excepting on the most pressing occasion: and such we esteem the practice of holding our fellow-creatures in slavery. We view it as contrary to the golden law of God, on which hang all the law and the prophets, and the unalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the Revolution, to hold in the deepest debasement, in a more abject slavery than is perhaps to be found in any part of the world except America, so many souls that are all capable of the image of God.

We therefore think it our most bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate this abomination from among us: and for that purpose we add the following to the Rules of our Society, namely:—



1. Every member of our Society who has slaves in his possession shall, within twelve months after notice given to him by the assistant, (which notice the assistants are required immediately, and without any delay, to give in their respective circuits,) legally execute and record an instrument whereby he emancipates and sets free every slave in his possession who is between the ages of forty and forty-five immediately, or at furthest when they arrive at the age of forty-five.

And every slave who is between the ages of twenty-five and forty immediately, or at furthest at the expiration of five years from the date of the said instrument. And every slave who is between the ages of twenty and twenty-five immediately, or at furthest when they arrive at the age of thirty. And every slave under the age of twenty, as soon as they arrive at the age of twenty-five at furthest. And every infant born in slavery after the above-mentioned rules are complied with, immediately on its birth.

2. Every assistant shall keep a journal, in which he shall regularly minute down the names and ages of all the slaves belonging to all the masters in his respective circuit, and also the date of every instrument executed and recorded for the manumission of the slaves, with the name of the court, book, and folio, in which the said instruments respectively shall have been recorded: which journal shall be handed down in each circuit to the succeeding assistants.

3. In consideration that these rules form a new term of communion, every person concerned who will not comply with them shall have liberty quietly to withdraw himself from our Society within the twelve months succeeding the notice given as aforesaid: otherwise the assistant shall exclude him in the Society.

4. No person so voluntarily withdrawn, or so excluded, shall ever partake of the supper of the Lord with the Methodists till he complies with the above requisitions.

5. No person holding slaves shall in future be admitted into Society or to the Lord's Supper till he previously complies with these rules concerning slavery.

*N. B.*—These rules are to affect the members of our Society no further than as they are consistent with the laws of the States in which they reside. And respecting our brethren in Virginia that are concerned, and after due consideration of their peculiar circumstances, we allow them two years from the notice given to consider the expedience of compliance or non-compliance with these rules.

Q. 43. What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away?

A. They are immediately to be expelled: unless they buy them on purpose to free them.

### On Baptism.

Q. 45. Is there any direction to be given concerning the administration of baptism?

A. Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized—



have their choice either of immersion or sprinkling, and let the Elder or Deacon conduct himself accordingly.

**Q. 46.** What shall be done with those who were baptized in their infancy, but have now scruples concerning the validity of infant baptism?

**A.** Remove their scruples by argument, if you can; if not, the office may be performed by immersion or sprinkling, as the person desires.\*

**Preachers' Fund.**—The ministry was, as yet, one family. For a considerable length of time each minister reported in Conference the amount of money he had received: if it was less than his allowance a record was made of the amount; if it was more, the additional money was handed over to the proper steward thereof, and the aggregate excess was divided among those less fortunate, in the ratio of their several deficiencies. With a view to provide for superannuated preachers, and widows and orphans of preachers, every itinerant was required to pay an admission fee on his reception into the Conference—a sum equivalent to two dollars and sixty cents in Federal money and afterward two dollars annually. Out of this fund every worn-out preacher was to receive sixty-four dollars a year “if he wanted it;” every widow, fifty-three dollars and thirty-three cents on the same condition; and every orphan child was entitled to receive, once for all, fifty-three dollars and thirty-three cents, “if required.” This fund continued in operation until 1796, and in the following year it was merged in what is now known as the “Chartered Fund,” incorporated in Philadelphia, from which the Conferences still receive a small annual income of from twenty to forty dollars.

**The First Home Mission Fund,** which was also established at the Christmas Conference, was called “A General Fund for carrying on the Holy Work of God.” This was to be raised by yearly collections in the Societies, and by a quarterly one if need be; the money to be principally used for the expenses of preachers sent into new and distant fields of labor. Thus the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Missionary Society commenced their history together.

While the number of preachers in America was small, there was but one Conference held each year; but in 1779 they had so increased as to render it inconvenient to meet in one place, and from that time

\* EMORY'S “History of the Discipline.”



till 1784 two Conferences were held, one in Baltimore, and one somewhere in Virginia, though the second was considered as an adjournment of the first. The Baltimore Conference being of the longest standing, and made up of the oldest preachers, took precedence of the Virginia Conference, especially in the making of rules for the Societies. The Christmas Conference of 1784, at which the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, was called a General Conference: the next General Conference was held in November, 1792.

**Statistics, 1785.**—The first year of the organization of the Church showed it to be in favor both with God and men. It had now eighteen thousand members, one hundred and four itinerant preachers, besides some hundreds of local preachers and exhorters, who were incessantly laboring in its service. The novelty of the methods adopted, and the scriptural simplicity of the doctrines taught, attracted the people in extraordinary multitudes, and the congregations which greeted the itinerants in their four to six weeks' circuit in chapels, barns, or groves, were the largest in the country. There were now more than sixty Methodist churches; but these were a small proportion of the regular preaching places.

The northernmost limit of the work at this time was Ash Grove, New York. It was planted in most of the counties in East and West Jersey. In Pennsylvania, there were Methodist Societies in Philadelphia, and in the counties of Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, Lancaster, Berks, and York, and in the southern tier of counties as far as Beaufort. Methodism had already carried its standard across the Alleghanies, and planted it in the Redstone settlement. It was also extending its march rapidly up the Juniata. In Virginia, there were Societies in every county east of the Alleghanies, and over at the headwaters of the Holston River. It was also rapidly spreading in the south-eastern counties of North Carolina, and in 1786 preachers were dispatched to new circuits in South Carolina and Georgia.

The new Episcopal organization was almost unanimously approved by the membership, who flocked to their newly-ordained preachers for the sacraments of which they had been so long deprived; and the labor of baptizing the children was no small part of their toil, hundreds being sometimes baptized at a single meeting.





## CHAPTER XX.

### PROGRESS UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

BISHOP COKE spent five months in the country, after the Christmas Conference, traveling and preaching incessantly, and having, to him, some strange experiences in traversing the wilderness and in swimming the swollen rivers. On one occasion he was nearly drowned in a swift current, where a drift-tree had lodged against the landing-place, and where, in his efforts to remove it, his horse was swept out from under him and the tree thrown over upon his back. In his account of the matter he says, "It was an awful time; however, through the blessing of my almighty Preserver, to whom be all the glory, I at last got my knee on the tree, which I grasped, and then soon disengaging myself, climbed up the little bank. I was now obliged to walk about a mile, shivering, before I came to a house." His horse was afterward found in the river by a negro, who presumed its rider was drowned, and therefore took possession of him, but soon after restored him to his proper owner.

**Bishop Coke an Abolitionist.**—The most difficult of all his labors was that in behalf of emancipation. The action of the Conference against slavery was clear and distinct. But when Coke



began to exhort the wealthy members of the Methodist Societies to emancipate their slaves, he found himself face to face with a great difficulty. So unwelcome was the doctrine he preached on this subject that he was sometimes in danger of violence, and it is said that on one occasion a Southern lady offered a crowd of ruffians fifty pounds "if they would give that little Doctor a hundred lashes," but they did not conclude the bargain. On account of his labors in the interest of emancipation he was beset by mobs, and finally arrested by the Virginia authorities for "sedition;" nevertheless he was quite successful. In his Journal, under date of April 12th, 1785, he says:—

"Kennon has emancipated twenty-two slaves. These are great sacrifices, for the slaves are worth, I suppose, upon an average, thirty or forty pounds sterling each, and perhaps more."

He also mentions one "Brother Martin," who, he says, "has done gloriously, for he has fully and immediately emancipated fifteen slaves." This was one of the results of a notable antislavery sermon preached by the Bishop, which made a great sensation, and caused several other brethren besides Martin to emancipate their slaves. On the 14th of the same month he writes: "I have now done with my testimony against slavery for a time, being got into North Carolina; the laws of this State forbidding any to emancipate their negroes."

**The First Southern Conference** was held by Bishop Coke at this time at the house of a brother in North Carolina named Hill. There were about twenty preachers present, who reported an increase in that section of nine hundred and ninety-one during the year. A preacher was sent to form a new circuit in Georgia, the whole State being given him for his range. Two men were also sent to South Carolina, in the capital of which State Mr. Asbury had been kindly received, and where, by the labors of some unknown local preacher, a society of over a hundred members had been brought together.

It is worthy of special attention, as showing the attitude of early Methodism toward slavery, that at this first Southern Conference, in 1785, a petition to the General Assembly of North Carolina was drawn up and signed by the Conference, praying that an act might be passed permitting such as desired to do so to emancipate their slaves. There was, however, a very strong opposition on the part of the friendly planters to the rules embodied in the Discipline on the



subject of slavery; and Dr. Coke says: "A great many principal friends met us here to insist on a repeal of the slave rules; but when they found that we had thoughts of withdrawing ourselves entirely from the circuit on account of the violent spirit of some leading men they drew in their horns, and sent us a very humble letter, entreating that preachers might be appointed for their circuit."

Besides the memorial to the General Assembly of North Carolina, above mentioned, a petition was drawn up, and a copy given to every preacher to be circulated for signatures, "entreating the General Assembly of Virginia to pass a law for the immediate or gradual emancipation of all its slaves." Bishop Coke records the hopefulness of this measure, saying: "It is to be signed by all the freeholders we can procure; and these, I believe, will not be few."

**Visit of Bishops Coke and Asbury to Washington, at Mount Vernon.**—On their return from the Southern Conference in North Carolina, Bishops Coke and Asbury visited Washington, at Mount Vernon. Of this interview with the most highly honored man in America, Coke has left the following record: "He received us very politely, and was open to access. He is quite the plain country gentleman. After dinner we desired a private interview, and opened to him the grand business on which we came, presenting to him our petition for the emancipation of the negroes, and entreating his signature, if the eminence of his station did not render it inexpedient for him to sign any petition. He informed us that he was of our sentiments, and had signified his thoughts on the subject to most of the great men of the State; that he did not see it proper to sign the petition; but if the Assembly took it into consideration would signify his sentiments to the Assembly by a letter. He asked us to spend the evening and lodge at his house, but our engagement at Annapolis the following day would not admit of it."

What there may have been in the position of George Washington, who, at this time, was a private citizen, holding no office, either military or civil, to prevent his signing the petition presented to him by Coke and Asbury, it is somewhat difficult to discover. It was a petition of Virginia freeholders to the General Assembly of their State, asking the passage of a law of which Washington privately declared his approbation. His proposal to write a personal letter in this interest, while,



at the same time he refused to sign a public petition, is more creditable to his caution than to his courage, and shows by contrast how grandly these Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church stood forth at first before the other great men of their time, as the pioneers of this grand movement in favor of universal liberty. Alas! that they should afterward have shrunk before the unavoidable difficulties of the question. The preachers were with them; the leading statesmen of the nation were with them; and many of the lay Methodist slaveholders were with them: but so strong was the pressure on the other side, that not many weeks after Coke had left Virginia he and Asbury conceded to the Conference in Baltimore the suspension of the rules on slavery, and they were never again fully enforced; though a decided declaration of opinion was recorded against the evil.\*

**Bishop Coke Departs for England.**—On the 1st of June, 1785, Coke and Asbury met the preachers in conference at Baltimore. As Coke was to leave for Europe the next day, they prolonged their session till midnight, and early in the morning the departing bishop preached to them, taking for his text the following passage, from Paul's exhortation to the elders at Ephesus, as recorded in the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles:—

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

"And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship."

\* STEVENS'S "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. ii, p. 252.



**Wesley's Defense of Bishop Coke.**—On the return of Coke from America he was attacked by Charles Wesley for his Episcopal doings at Baltimore; but he vindicated himself by appealing to the authority of John Wesley, though he acknowledged that in one of his sermons at Baltimore he had used language unduly severe toward the Anglican Establishment; an offense which, in the eyes of his accuser, was scarcely to be forgiven. Charles Wesley also accused Coke of being "ambitious and rash," in view of the fact that he had accepted from the American brethren the nominal, as well as actual, position of "Bishop." Upon this John Wesley came to the defense of his American envoy, and replied to his brother Charles in the following words; which are commended to the attention of those who declare that Wesley did not intend that Coke and Asbury should be Bishops of an Episcopal Methodism in America:—

"I believe," says Wesley, "Dr. Coke is as free from ambition as from covetousness. He has *done* nothing rashly that I know; but he has *spoken* rashly, which he retracted the moment I spoke to him of it. . . . He is now such a right hand to me as Thomas Walsh was; if you will not or cannot help me yourself, do not hinder those who can and will."

If Wesley had not intended to confer Episcopal powers upon Dr. Coke it is incredible that he could use such strong language in defending him against the aspersions of his own brother, Charles, who attacked him at this precise point. Fully sustained by Mr. Wesley, Coke resumed his missionary tours throughout the United Kingdom, preaching to great congregations, and kindling new enthusiasm among the Societies in the interest of foreign missions.

**Bishop Coke's Second Visit to the United States.**

—Having organized the mission work in the West Indies, Bishop Coke sailed on the 10th of February, 1787, for Charleston, S. C.

The Society here had prospered in spite of the difficulties arising from its position on the slavery question, and both whites and blacks labored together for the erection of the new Methodist chapel; a building which, Stevens says, "accommodated fifteen hundred hearers," and which Coke describes as "worth a thousand pounds sterling," although there were only forty white persons in the Society.

Here Bishops Coke and Asbury again met and held the first Con-



ference in the State of South Carolina, the Georgia preachers also being present. There was no riot or mob on this occasion, but peace, harmony, and joy prevailed in view of the rapid progress of the work of God.

The Conference being over, Asbury provided his brother Bishop with a good horse, and they set out together on a grand preaching tour. The roads were generally bad, the forests dense, and the swamps frequent and frightful; nevertheless, they pushed on, making in one week a distance of over three hundred miles, and preaching every day.

"The preachers," writes Coke, "ride here about a hundred miles a week; but the swamps and morasses they have to pass through it is tremendous to relate. Though it is now the month of April, I was above my knees in water on horseback in passing through a deep morass, and that when it was almost dark. . . . In traveling our rides are so long that we are frequently on horseback till midnight."

But he delights in his adventurous ministry. "I have got," he continues, "into my old romantic way of life; preaching in the midst of great forests, with scores and sometimes hundreds of horses tied to the trees; a sight which adds much interest to the scene." He was surprised at the triumphant progress of Methodism in these Southern regions. "Much of the glory and of the hand of God," he writes, "have I seen in riding through the circuit called Pedee, in South Carolina. When I was in America before there were but twenty in Society in this circuit; and it was much doubted at the Conference whether it would be for the glory of God to send even one preacher to this part of the country. But now, chiefly by the means of two young men, Hope Hull and Jeremiah Maston, the Societies consist of eight hundred and twenty-three members; and no less than two and twenty preaching-houses have been erected in this single circuit in the course of the last year."

When they reached Halifax County, Va., where Coke, in his former tour, was presented by the grand jury as a seditious person on account of his antislavery exhortations, they now received him "with perfect peace and quietness." A rampant slaveholder, who had pursued him with a gun in order to shoot him, had been converted to God, and become a member of the Society. In Mecklenburgh County he preached to about four thousand people, the largest congregation he



had ever seen in America, though "there was no town within a great many miles." A Conference was held here in the primeval forest, and on such occasions, as well as at the minor quarterly conferences, the people came scores of miles to attend these high religious festivals.

At this Conference good news reached them from beyond the mountains. "Haw, one of our elders," says Coke, "who last year was sent with a preacher to Kentucky, on the banks of the Ohio near the Mississippi, wrote to us a most enlivening account of the prospect in his district, and earnestly implored some further assistance. 'But observe,' added he, 'no one must be appointed for this country that is afraid to die! For there is now war with the Indians, who frequently lurk behind the trees, shoot the travelers, and then scalp them; and we have one Society on the very frontiers of the Indian country.' After this letter was read a blessed young man (Brother Williamson) offered himself as a volunteer for this dangerous work. What can we not do or suffer when the love of Christ constrains!"

The Bishops reached Baltimore on the 1st of May, at which time and place the Northern Conference for the year 1787 was held; it having been changed from its appointed date of July 24th, to accommodate Bishop Coke. At this Conference additions to the Societies were reported to the astonishing number of six thousand six hundred in a single year. No wonder Coke exulted as he beheld the glorious success of the Church, of which he was the first Bishop. Two elders and eleven deacons were ordained at this Conference, and another young man offered himself as a volunteer for what was then the almost unexplored wilderness of Kentucky. From the Baltimore Conference the Bishops paid a visit to New York, from which place Coke returned to Philadelphia, whence he embarked again for Europe on the 25th of June, 1787.

**Cokesbury College.**—On Sunday, the 5th of June, 1785, Bishop Asbury, with great solemnity, laid the corner-stone of the first Methodist college in America, at Abingdon, in Maryland, about eighteen miles east of Baltimore.

The establishment of this school had been agreed upon at the Christmas Conference, and nearly \$5,000 had been raised for the purpose, which in those days was a very large sum of money, and the raising of it among the Methodist Societies of that day is greatly to



their honor. The name, as it is evident at first sight, belongs to the composite order, the word having been constructed for the purpose of complimenting both the American Bishops in the name of the first Methodist college. The management was committed to a board of fifteen trustees; five of whom, namely, John Chalmers, Henry Willis, Nelson Reed, Richard Whatcoat, and Joseph Everett, were traveling preachers.

The building for which Coke contracted, but whose commencement he could not stay to witness, was one hundred and eight feet in length from East to West, forty in breadth, and three stories in height. It stood in a campus of six acres, and commanded one of the most magnificent views imaginable, comprising portions of the Valley of the Susquehanna, and of the beautiful shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

In December, 1787, the Rev. Mr. Heath, a middle-aged clergyman sent out from England by Mr. Wesley for the purpose, was publicly inaugurated as President; with the Quaker, Truman Marsh, and Patrick M'Closkey, whose name is sufficiently suggestive of his nationality, as professors. The number of students was now twenty-five.

For a small college the ceremonies connected with this occasion were somewhat extensive; the entire programme occupying no less than three days, on each of which Bishop Asbury preached a sermon. His text, on the second day, Sunday, was from 2 Kings iv, 40: "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot." Whether the choice of this text was suggested by the fears of the good Bishop that the higher scholarship of American Methodism would sink to the level of that of Oxford and Cambridge, or whether he had a vivid sense of the early troubles in Mr. Wesley's school at Kingswood, or still again, whether he possessed a sad foreboding of the misfortunes which were to befall this college, it is not possible now to determine, but the text is suggestive of all three.

For a time the school prospered greatly. Its advantages, as well as the beauty of its surroundings, made Abingdon an attractive place of residence. In 1789 it was blessed with a great revival of religion; and in 1792 it reported over seventy students, who, besides the English branches, received instruction in the French, German, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages.

In the Discipline of 1789 is given a detailed statement of the



design and order of the institution. The college was to be under the presidentship of the Bishops; to be supported by a yearly collection throughout the circuits: the sons of the Methodist preachers and poor orphans were to be received as charity students, and were to be clothed as well as taught and boarded at the college expense: the young men were to be trained "in the ancient way, that they might be rational, scriptural Christians:" in teaching the languages care was to be taken "to read those authors, and those only, who joined together the purity, the strength, and the elegance of their several tongues." Students were required to rise at five in the morning, summer and winter; to study seven hours a day, with intervals for recreation, which comprised the practical studies of agriculture and architecture; a large plot of ground being laid out as a kitchen-garden, and a workshop being provided, stocked with carpenters', cabinet makers', and turners' tools. The building, apparatus, and library cost upward of ten thousand pounds; and thus, like most of its successors, this first Methodist college commenced its career burdened with a heavy debt. Asbury struggled manfully to keep its head above water, and for some years it was substantially a Church school; but in an evil day the trustees, with the consent of the Bishops but without the consent of all the Conferences, obtained an act of incorporation which secured to their board, to the exclusion of the Conference, the entire control of the institution. No small dissatisfaction was caused by this step, but the quarrel ended in smoke; for on the 4th of December, 1795, ten years after it was opened, the college was set on fire and burned to the ground.\*

Asbury, who was in Charleston, S. C., when he received the news, wrote in his Journal: "We have now a second and confirmed account that Cokesbury College is consumed to ashes, a sacrifice of £10,000 in about ten years. Its enemies may rejoice, and its friends need not mourn. If any man should give me £10,000 per year to do and suffer again what I have done for that house I would not do it. The Lord called not Mr. Whitefield nor the Methodists to build colleges. I wished only for schools—Dr. Coke wanted a college. I feel distressed at the loss of the library."

\* "Early Methodism in Baltimore," by Rev. W. Hamilton. *Methodist Quarterly Review*, July, 1856.



**A Dancing Hall Transformed into a Methodist School-house.**—No ways discouraged by this severe calamity, seventeen of the principal Methodists of Baltimore met together to take measures to supply the place of Cokesbury College. One of the principal opponents of Methodism in Baltimore was a Mr. Brydon, the landlord of the Fountain Inn; the aristocratic house in those times. Merchants, army officers, and other distinguished persons, General Washington among them, were his guests. Brydon had been a barber to some of the English officers during the Revolution, and had settled in Baltimore on the conclusion of peace. He was a staunch defender of the Church of England; and by way of exhibiting his Churchmanship, he took special pains to show his contempt for the Methodists.

It was not only for the purpose of furnishing a place of fashionable amusement, but also to vex the Methodists, that Brydon built a dancing-hall next door to the Light-street Church; and when it was ready for use he systematically held his balls and concerts on the same nights with the Methodist meetings. "It was a strange sight to look upon," says one of the old Baltimoreans, "fiddling and dancing going on in one room, and singing and praying in the next, within hearing of each other." In the midst of the dance a shout would sometimes be heard in the Methodist camp over the conversion of a soul, or in view of some high experience related by a believer; whereupon the dancers would break from the set and run to the windows to ascertain the cause, indulging, doubtless, in noises of another sort, which were by no means edifying to the meeting.

But the singing and praying proved to be more than a match for the fiddling and dancing. Moreover, the conduct of Brydon began to be blamed by sensible people, who regarded the war as having secured to every one the privilege of worshiping God according to the dictates of his own conscience. The attendance at the dancing-hall waned, while that at the church increased; and Brydon, who had expended much money on his hall of pleasure, which was the most elegant building in the town, began to be anxious to dispose of the property. His hiring some ruffians to break up one of the meetings greatly hastened his downfall, for his guests took up the subject next morning at breakfast, and remembering that Brydon had been in the British



service, and that he was a Tory as well as a Churchman, they declared that his conduct was an insult to the American people; and, packing up their effects, they left the Fountain Inn in a body.

This same dancing-hall was the building which the Baltimore Methodists purchased for an academy to succeed the ill-fated Cokesbury college. The purchase money was fifteen hundred and thirty pounds, six hundred pounds of which was raised by solicitation from house to house, after the members of the Society had subscribed seven hundred pounds among themselves; the remaining two hundred and thirty pounds being secured in the names of the seventeen brethren who had inaugurated the movement.



THE OLD LIGHT-STREET PARSONAGE.

But the academy was no more fortunate than the college. For awhile it was quite a popular institution, and contained at one time as many as two hundred pupils, but before the end of its first year a fire broke out in a neighboring carpenter's shop, and both the academy and the Light-street Church were destroyed. This fire occurred on the 4th of December, 1796.

**The Old Light-street Parsonage**, which is still standing, though somewhat modernized in its appearance, is one of the most notable Methodist relics in existence. It stood in the rear of Brydon's dancing-hall, being then used as a dressing-room; and after the fire it



was purchased for a parsonage, and the New Light-street Church was erected over the ruins of the hall.

After the fire, which destroyed the hall and church, a conference room was fitted up in the garret of the parsonage, its partitions being removed and the roof supported by pillars. This upper room, or garret, was reached by the flight of steps shown in the picture. It was the scene of many a conference, both quarterly and annual, and under these rafters, for the first forty years of the history of the Church, more councils were held, more questions debated, and more plans determined, than in any other one house in the whole Connection. The preacher's office, which was the business head-quarters of the denomination in Maryland and Virginia, was on the first floor of the old parsonage, and on the floor above was the residence of Bishop Asbury; containing his meager library, which, with the horses he wore out in his tireless journeys up and down the continent, comprised nearly the sum total of his worldly goods. When he was in health he journeyed in the saddle; when he was sick he took refuge in a Jersey wagon, or a heavy, lumbering, two-horse chaise; and if, besides his saddle and his carriage he may be said to have possessed any home on earth, it was his humble bachelor quarters in the Light-street parsonage.

**Male Free School, Baltimore.**—The successor, though not the heir, of Cokesbury College, was the Male Free School of Baltimore, which had its beginning in this same parsonage garret. It was organized by the Rev. George Roberts, at the time of the first yellow fever epidemic in Baltimore, as a public charity for the benefit of the poor orphans whose parents had died of the fever. It was supported by personal contributions from people of all religious persuasions, and still remains a flourishing institution, though it is no longer exclusively a male school.

**The Bishop of North America.**—Being now alone in charge of the whole work, Asbury felt moved, if possible, to increase his already incredible labors, and to make himself felt as much as possible throughout the length and breadth of the Church; which length and breadth he was constantly planning to extend.

From Philadelphia, where Coke embarked for Europe on the 25th of June, 1787, Asbury made his way as far north as West Point, on the Hudson, addressing audiences sometimes numbering a thousand



people in the forests, and praising God for the privilege of suffering and toiling in his name. The solitary woods through which he journeyed by rides of from twenty to fifty miles a day, were especially delightful to his soul. There are indications that he possessed a sensitive and poetic nature, which would have been more apparent in his words and work, if he had not been constantly taxed to the utmost, even beyond his strength. "In traveling thus," he says, "I suffer much from hunger and cold. O what a weariness would life be without God, and love, and labor! I am happy in being alone, and pour out my soul to God for the whole work, and the dear people and preachers of my charge."

Southward now, again, to Charleston; where he holds a Conference, and is mobbed in the church; the services ending in "dreadful confusion." On the evening of the same day, however, he preaches again, when the mob attack the church with stones, one of which crashes through a window and strikes near the preacher in the pulpit. The missile, however, only helps to punctuate his discourse, which he proceeds to finish regardless of the uproar without; and on reviewing his experience, he remarks: "I have more liberty to preach in Charleston this visit than I ever had before, and am of opinion that God will work here, but our friends are afraid of the cross."

This rough reception in the capital of South Carolina was doubtless in consequence of the efforts in favor of the emancipation of the slaves which had distinguished the labors of Coke and Asbury in this region the previous year. He appears to have spent this winter at the South, exploring the wilderness of South Carolina and Georgia, into which a tide of immigration was pouring from the North, and where he was preparing to follow it up with the means of grace. There were already seven regular itinerants and four probationers riding their circuits in this far-away region, with whom he held a little Conference at the Forks of Broad River, on the 9th of April, 1788; at which he learned, greatly to his delight, that the seed which was sown had already sprung up. "Many," says he, "that had no religion in Virginia, have found it after their removal into Georgia and South Carolina."

He now directed his course toward the Holstein country, over the Alleghanies; the most distant region of the West known to his geog-



raphy. The crossing of these mountains was no easy task, but there were souls to be saved among the straggling settlements in Eastern Tennessee and Kentucky, and therefore he, being a chief shepherd, must go and search for these scattered sheep in the wilderness.

After what he calls "an awful journey" up and down the steep and slippery trails, using his horse as a bridge for the streams, and camping at night on the floors of log-cabins, soaked with the rain and



A FRONTIER RESIDENCE.

shivering with cold, he reached the scene of the first Conference in the Tennessee country, at Key's Woods.

It is interesting to note, in Asbury's early Journals, the personal relations of friendship and helpfulness which the frontier Methodists sustained to each other. Instead of mentioning the names of towns or villages, or even settlements, where he is entertained from time to time, he gives the names of the brethren who showed him hospitality; thus: "At the head of the Wautaga we fed, and reached Ward's that night." "After taking a little rest here, we set out next morning for Brother Coxe's, on Holstein River." Again: "I fed at I. Smith's, and prayed with the family." "And now, after riding seventy-five miles, I have thirty-five miles more to General Russell's." "Midnight brought us up at Janes's, after riding forty, or perhaps fifty, miles." "After a quarterly meeting at Clarksburg, where we stopped at



Colonel Jackson's," he says, "we rode thirty miles to Father Hammond's." There are continual records to the same effect.

At Father Hammond's he takes a retrospect of his journey over the Alleghanies, though he does not use much time in recording it, for he only arrives at midnight, and is up again at five o'clock the next morning. "My mind," he says, "has been severely tried under the great fatigue endured both by myself and my horse. O how glad should I be of a plain, clean plank to lie on, as preferable to most of the beds; and where the beds are in a bad state, the floors are worse. The gnats are almost as troublesome here as the mosquitoes in the lowlands of the seaboard. This country will require much work to make it tolerable. The people are, many of them, of the boldest cast of adventurers, and with some the decencies of civilized society are scarcely regarded. On the one hand, savage warfare teaches them to be cruel; and on the other, the preaching of Antinomians poisons them with error in doctrine. Good moralists they are not, and good Christians they cannot be, unless they are better taught."

**Pioneering.**—Asbury seemed to carry the whole country in his heart, and in their hearts both preachers and people carried their matchless Bishop. He was the leading and controlling spirit of the little army of itinerants who kept the Gospel sounding up and down the continent; pushing their circuits under his direction out into the wilderness, close on the track of the boldest frontiersmen. They were continually in peril of their lives, from cold and exposure, from breaking their necks on mountain precipices, from drowning in rivers which had no bridges, from being transfixed by the arrow of some skulking Indian, or dying in the hands of mobs of semi-barbarous white men who had a constitutional hatred for all ministers, more especially these; but with a courage which amounted to exultation they kept steadily at work, gladdened by the wonderful success of the word which they preached, and conscious that the eye of their heroic Bishop was watching, and his great soul planning, their campaigns, and that his toils and sufferings were often greater than their own.

Heroism is a loadstone which fails not to attract the hearts which are true as steel. On this principle it must have been that the very difficulties and privations of the itinerants helped to fill their ranks, and to call out two or three recruits to take the place of every man that



fell. They knew at the outset that they must carry their lives in their hands; but this they could do all the more easily because they had so little else to carry.

Here is a preacher on a salary of sixty-four dollars a year, provided he could get so much; and if he received any more he carried the surplus up to Conference to help out the stipends of his less fortunate brethren—here is a preacher starting out on his way to his distant frontier circuit. He fares well enough at the Methodist taverns of Brother Jones, or Father Hayward, or Brother Smith; but having passed the last of them, he finds no other bed but the ground, and no other roof but the sky. Under these circumstances he fastens his horse, unrolls his blanket, kneels down and performs his evening devotions with a freedom and fervor which makes many an echo in the solitary woods, and then, with his saddle for a pillow, he lies down to dream of preaching great sermons, and seeing the forest full of sinners inquiring what they must do to be saved.

With break of day he springs to his feet, shivering with cold and perhaps shaking with ague, makes his breakfast off an ear of raw corn, which he shares with his faithful four-footed companion, or a frozen turnip which he has picked up in crossing a field; or, wanting these comforts of civilized life, he gnaws the bark or the root of some shrub or tree; and having looked well to the wants of his horse, he mounts and begins his day's journey, which he enlivens from time to time with the practice of his intended sermons, or the verses of some of the grand old Methodist hymns.

**Has he a Horse?**—A horse was indispensable to the itinerant, and the people of the circuits were expected to see that their preacher was provided with one; just as now they are expected to provide him a parsonage; that is, in case it were a well-to-do circuit, and the preacher a full member of Conference. But the probationers must find a horse for themselves, and every new candidate must present himself ready-mounted.

To the great questions of his examination, such as these, "Is this man truly converted?" "Does he know and keep our rules?" "Can he preach acceptably?" there was added this other one, never before set down in any such catechism, namely, "Has he a horse?"



The old fable of the Centaurs was never so fully realized as in the early Methodist preachers. The horses, it is true, were not in regular orders, nevertheless, they were a very vital portion of the regular traveling ministry; while for sound judgment as to the points and value of that useful animal, the "saddle-bags men" were rarely, if ever, excelled. Ancient history has drawn the portrait of Bucephalus, the war-horse of Alexander the Great. Alas! that none of the early his-



A "SADDLE-BAGS MAN."

torians in their pioneer chronicles have recorded the name and fame of some of those four-footed servants of the Church, which, besides the usual duties of their station, were often required to serve as guides in the wilderness, bridges to the rivers, safety in a race for life, before mobs and Indians, and which were honored as creatures of their kind never were honored before, by being held as an essential part of the qualification for the holy office of the ministry.



**Richmond Nolley.**—As a specimen of the persistent search for souls in the fringes of settlements on the far side of the wilderness, Bishop M'Tyeire, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, mentions an experience of Richmond Nolley, who, in 1812, was appointed to the Tombigbee Circuit, a wild region of country lying about three hundred and fifty miles beyond any known settlement in the South-west, and just opened up for white immigrants by the removal of the Choctaw Indians.

After camping out for eleven nights in the woods Nolley reached the Tombigbee River, and began exploring his circuit.

One day he observed a fresh wagon-track, and being bent on finding any thing that had a soul to be saved, he struck in and followed it till he came upon an immigrant family just halted at the spot where they were intending to make their future home. The man was caring for his horses and the woman was busy at the fire preparing supper.

"What!" exclaimed the settler, as he heard the salutation of Nolley, "another Methodist preacher! Have you found me already? I left Virginia to get out of their reach, and went to a new settlement in Georgia, but they hunted me out and got my wife and daughter into the Church; then I heard there was some good land down here in Choctaw Corner, and I made sure I should get clear of you by coming off, and now, a preacher comes along before I can unpack my wagon!"

"My friend," replied Nolley, "if you were to go to heaven, you would find Methodist preachers there; if you go to hell, I'm afraid you will find some of them there; and you see how it is in this world, so you had better make terms with us, and be at peace."

Like many another brave itinerant, Nolley's faithfulness and self-forgetfulness cost him his life. Cost him his life, did I say? Nay, rather, but gained him immortality and eternal life among the glorious company of the martyrs, in exchange for the toils and privations of his ministry below.

After faithful service he went up to the far-distant Conference at Baltimore, in failing health, which was the result of the severity of his work; but the Bishop sent him back again, for thus it seemed best for the interests of the Church; and in those days the comfort of the man was not very much considered.



His route lay across a swift, deep river, at that time much swollen with storms of rain, and clogged with floating drift-wood. Its only bridge was his horse; but the faithful animal, with an instinct of danger, refused to enter the stream. However, his master was inexorable, and in he plunged, only to be carried off his feet in an instant. Bravely he breasted the current, and at length, completely exhausted, bore his rider to the opposite shore; but the bank was steep, and in his desperate efforts to mount it he unseated his rider, who, falling into the stream, was nearly drowned.

At length, however, Nolley reached the shore, drenched and half-frozen, for the weather was cold, utterly exhausted, far from any human habitation, and night just coming on. His faithful animal was lost, and being too weak to walk, he knelt upon the ground to offer his last prayer, as it appeared to those who found his body, from the marks of his knees in the half-frozen earth: then choosing a mossy spot underneath a tree, he calmly laid himself out for death and burial. His eyes were closed, his hands folded across his breast, and a peaceful smile lingered on his cold, dead face.

**Asbury's Episcopal Discipline.**—The sacrifice which Asbury deliberately made of the health, the comfort, and even the lives of the preachers under his episcopal authority, has been charged against him as a blot upon his administration if not upon his character. Men will glow with enthusiasm over the brilliant manner in which some army officer leads his command to inevitable destruction for the purpose of gaining some paltry victory of the military sort. Shall it be counted a crime against mankind that a captain of the hosts of the Lord should lead to certain death, and certain and eternal victory, the men who, when they entered this line of service, consecrated their lives as well as their time and talents to the work?

Asbury sent no man where he was not willing to go himself; and if men perished under his eyes, in their efforts to save the souls of lost sinners, it was in a godly judgment a sacrifice eminently fit to be made. A Greater than Bishop Asbury has said, "He that findeth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." Acting on this principle, Asbury counted the health, the strength, and the life of the ministry as the rightful, as well as the consecrated, property of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be expended with such wisdom



as might be given to him, for the welfare and progress of the Church. As he understood the matter, the ministry was for the Church, and not the Church for the ministry; and the men who entered that ministry under his command knew at the outset, that danger and death must not for one moment frighten them from duty.

That the Bishop himself should have lived thirty-two years after entering upon his Episcopal labors, upon which he entered with feeble health and an apparently broken constitution, is one of those modern miracles which are sometimes scouted by those who declare that the age of miracles has ceased. During all this time he traveled about six thousand miles a year; much of the way on horseback; for the sufficient reason that along the roads he traveled any other method of conveyance was impossible. He ranged incessantly from Canada to Georgia, and from the Atlantic to the ever-extending borders of civilization toward the West; riding thirty or forty miles a day, preaching, leading classes, administering sacraments, almost daily; holding frequent conferences, writing a thousand letters a year, sharing the poverty and privations of the poorest people in his great parish without condescension or complaint; and on the other hand, enjoying the princely hospitality of the few wealthy Methodists in America, without being tempted by it into any "softness," or delay; and suffering, the greater part of his time, from rheumatism, chills and fever, and other bodily afflictions brought on by exposure and overwork.

Bishop Asbury was a man of prayer. In his pastoral visits among the people he always prayed with them. It was his custom to pray with the families that entertained him at the close of every meal. During sessions of Conference, he prayed over each name on the list of appointments, and for years he made it a part of his duty to offer prayer daily for every one of his preachers by name, until the muster-roll of the itinerant army became so long as to be a burden to his memory.

Such a leader could be followed anywhere. It was an honor which the early itinerants appreciated, to be under the command of such a man. He stood before them as the Vicar of Christ, in a higher sense than that in which the most abject Papist was ever able to comprehend that glorious title; he dwelt in a superior region, which may be called the "prayer country;" no wonder, therefore, that in his presence



men often felt themselves privileged with the society of a superior being. His broad and rich humanity equalled their largest conception of a man; and, superadded to this, there was a halo of spiritual glory about him which was God's own seal of approbation of, and special baptism for, the fulfillment of his mighty task. With such a man at their head, and with a sense of the Lord above them, toil was pleasure to the itinerants, pain was honor, and death was heaven.

What are soldiers good for who dare not go into battle lest they should be shot? What are sailors good for who dare not go to sea lest they should be drowned? What were itinerant Methodist preachers good for who were afraid of being "worn out?" If a man died on his circuit of hard work and exposure, was killed by the Indians, or was drowned in crossing a stream, that was doubtless the proper time and place for him to die. Either he was not the man for the work, or else he had done his share of it and gone to his rest. That a circuit rider was in continual peril of life and limb was a matter of course; if the man counted himself to possess any thing, even to his own body and soul, which he did not hold loosely, and use freely in doing the work of the Lord, he was not fit for one of Asbury's preachers. If their task wearied them they must keep at it till it did not weary them. If fevers burned them, they must burn out the fevers. If the ague shook them, they must shake it off. No wonder that a ministry enlisted and commanded on these principles should have become the greatest religious power on earth. The system killed off the feeble ones and drove off the lazy ones, but those who remained were the giants of those days, and indeed, of all days; for, taking the world over and the centuries through, no class of God's servants have ever given a better account of themselves, or left behind them more abundant proofs of faithfulness and power.

But while the Church gazes in admiration at this band of itinerant heroes, let it not fail to think what sort of man that Bishop must have been who could call out, energize, and command such a ministry, and, through all his long career, never lose his place as the grandest hero of them all.

**The First Conference in New York** was held by Asbury at the Wesley Chapel, commencing Tuesday, the 30th of September, 1788. Thomas Morrill was here ordained a deacon, and



appointed to the Trenton Circuit. This was the first Conference held north of Philadelphia, at a time when Conferences were held every six months; a fact which would indicate that Methodism, in what is now the metropolitan city of the Church, and in the region round about, had hitherto been of a much slower growth than in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. But, at the second Conference in the State of New York the membership was reported as 2,004, being an increase of 900 in less than a year.

**Encouraging Reports.**—Conferences were held during the second visit of Dr. Coke, in Georgia, on the 8th of March, 1789, where



METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,  
MORRISTOWN, N. J.

2,011 members were reported, being an increase of 784 for the year; in Charleston, South Carolina, on the 17th of March, in which State there were 3,377 members, being an increase of 907 for the year; in North Carolina, at the house of a planter named M'Knight, on the Yadkin River, on the 20th of April, at which the membership in this State was reported at 6,779, being an increase of 741; and on the 18th of May, for the State of Virginia, at Petersburg, which was the first Conference ever held in that State.

On this tour Coke had further interesting experiences of itinerating in America. "Frequently," he says, "we were obliged to lodge in houses built with round logs and open to every blast. Often we rode sixteen or eighteen miles without seeing a house or a human creature, and often were obliged to ford deep and dangerous rivers and creeks. Many times we ate nothing from seven in the morning till six in the evening, though sometimes we took our repast on stumps of trees near some spring of water."

On the 23d of May the first New Jersey Conference was held at Trenton, in which place, for a notable exception, Methodism had been decreasing. The report showed 1,751 members in New Jersey, a decrease of 295.



The whole number of Methodists reported at the Conference of the year 1789 was 43,265, being an increase, since the Conference of the year before, a period of about eight months, of 6,111. Of the above members, 35,021, were whites; 8,241, were blacks, and three were Indians. Alas! what had become of all Mr. Wesley's delightful anticipations of building up a purer form of Christian civilization among those uncorrupted children of nature?

**Revival Scenes.**—During this tour Coke was amazed at the revival scenes which he witnessed. As a notable example he mentions the services which he held at Annapolis, Maryland:—

"After my last prayer," he says, "the congregation began to pray and praise aloud in a most astonishing manner. At first I felt some reluctance to enter into the business, but soon the tears began to flow, and I have seldom found a more comforting or strengthening time. What shall we say? Souls are awakened and converted by multitudes, and the work is surely genuine, if there be a genuine work of God upon the earth. Whether there be wildfire in it or not, I do most ardently wish that there was such a work at this time in England."

At the Baltimore Conference, opened on the 4th of May, still more demonstrative scenes occurred. After an evening sermon by Coke, the crowded assembly spent the night till two o'clock in prayer and praise. "Out of a congregation of two thousand people, I suppose," he says, "two or three hundred were engaged in praising God, praying for the conviction and conversion of sinners, or exhorting those around them; and hundreds more were engaged in wrestling prayer either for their own conversion or sanctification. One of our elders was the means that night of the conversion of seven poor penitents within his little circle in less than fifteen minutes. Such was the zeal of many, that a tolerable company attended the preaching at five the next morning, notwithstanding the late hour at which they parted. Next evening Mr. Asbury preached, and again the congregation began as before. This praying and praising aloud has been common in Baltimore for a considerable time, notwithstanding our congregation in this town was for many years before one of the calmest and most critical upon the Continent. Many also of our elders, who were the most sedate of our preachers, have entered with all their hearts into this work. And it must be allowed, that gracious and wonderful has been the change,



our greatest enemies themselves being the judges, that has been wrought on multitudes on whom this work begun at those wonderful seasons." He notices with interest "a custom peculiar to the American preachers. If there be more preachers than one in a congregation, the preachers that have not preached give each of them a warm exhortation. And so far as I can judge, by external effects wrought on the congregations, and by constant inquiry and information, more good has been done in most instances by the exhortations than by the sermon."

These revival scenes, which at first so surprised and afterward gladdened the heart of Bishop Coke, were but the drops before a more plentiful shower. Asbury mentions a quarterly-meeting in Delaware, in November, of which he says:—

"The first day the Lord was powerfully present, and the people greatly agitated. On the second day, at the love-feast and sacrament, there was a shout, and I believe two hundred souls praised God at one time. My soul was happy among them."

His next entry is as follows: "Maryland, Saturday, [November] 7th, (1789):—

"At Anamesssex quarterly meeting the Lord was among the people on the first day. On Sunday, at the love-feast, the young were greatly filled, and the power of the Most High spread throughout. It appeared as if they would have continued till night if they had not been in some measure forced to stop that we might have public worship. I stood near the window and spoke on Isaiah lxiv, 1-5. There was a stir, and several sinners went away. There were very uncommon circumstances of a supernatural kind said to be observed at this meeting. The *saints of the world* are dreadfully displeased at this work, which, after all, is the best evidence that it is of God.

"The preachers urged me to preach at Princess Anne. I did so, and many poor, afflicted people came out. I trust some will be able to say of Christ, 'He is altogether lovely.'

"I felt uncommon power in preaching at Thomas Garrettson's. Surely the Lord will work."

And so on through the remainder of the year.

**O'Kelly and the "Republican Methodist Church."**

—On the 12th of January, 1790, after holding a quarterly meeting on



the old Brunswick Circuit, "where there was a considerable quickening and manifestation of the Lord's power," and where an increase of the Society of more than a hundred souls was reported, Asbury makes this mournful record in his Journal:—

"I received a letter from the presiding elder of this district, James O'Kelly: he makes heavy complaints of my power, and bids me stop for one year, or he must use his influence against me. Power! power! there is not a vote given in a Conference in which the presiding elder has not greatly the advantage of me; all the influence I am to gain over a company of young men in a district must be done in three weeks; the greater part of them, perhaps, are seen by me only at Conference, while the presiding elder has had them with him all the year, and has the greatest opportunity of gaining influence. This advantage may be abused; let the Bishops look to it: but who has the power to lay an embargo on me, and to make of none effect the decision of all of the Conferences of the Union?"

James O'Kelly, who, from his name, might be of Irish extraction, was the first reformer in the line of Church polity which American Methodism produced. He commenced his ministerial work during the war of the Revolution, as a local preacher; and in 1778 was admitted into the traveling connection, being then only about twenty-four years old. He was one of the elders ordained by Coke and Asbury at the Christmas Conference of 1784, and was for a number of years one of the most enterprising and influential itinerants in Virginia; in which State he was presiding elder of the Southern District, and a member of the first ministerial council, (the forerunner of the first General Conference,) which was held at Cokesbury College in 1789. O'Kelly was an ardent republican, and it is to be feared that he allowed his politics, if not his ambition, to modify and flavor his religion. Like many another reformer since his day, he appears to have leaped to the conclusion that because a republican form of Government was good for the State, it was, therefore, good for the Church; forgetting the words of his Master, who never calls his Church a republic, and who distinctly says, "My kingdom is not of this world."

The O'Kelly secession was projected and justified on the ground of episcopal tyranny. In the General Conference of 1792, which began on the 1st of November, at Baltimore, O'Kelly offered a reso-



lution, "That if any preacher feels himself aggrieved or oppressed by the appointment made by the Bishop, he shall have the privilege of appealing to the Conference; which shall consider and finally determine the matter." After full and thorough debate the resolution was lost, whereupon he withdrew from the Conference, and was joined by three of the regular preachers, and a number of local preachers, with whom he organized the so-called Republican Methodist Church, in which all the preachers were to stand, as nearly as possible, on an equal footing. No degrees were allowed in the ministry, and greater liberty was promised to the people than they had hitherto enjoyed.

The influence of O'Kelly in Southern Virginia and North Carolina was very great; and in his zeal for republican liberty in the Church he appeared to forget all about "brotherly kindness and charity." Bishop Asbury was the object of his peculiar displeasure, and the members of the new organization not only "professed to regard the name of bishop with holy horror," but used every possible means to impeach the character and break down the authority of the man whose severe administration of discipline they sought to escape by secession.

In the contentions which resulted from this first reform movement a few of the preaching-houses were seized and the rightful owners turned out of doors; families were rent asunder; old friends became open enemies; and Jesse Lee says: "It was enough to make the saints of God weep between the porch and the altar, and that both day and night, to see how the Lord's people was carried away captive by the division." During the six years, from 1792 to 1798, the Conference minutes show a declension in membership of about 8,000; but not all of these joined the Republican Methodists, as would appear from the disappointment of O'Kelly at the smallness of the number of his followers.

This opponent of Episcopacy at length assumed Episcopal functions, and ordained such new preachers as joined his party; but, in 1801, finding that Republicanism and Methodism did not work well together, or, perhaps, to cut loose completely from that body of believers which persisted in prospering in spite of his opposition, he changed the name of his enterprise to "The Christian Church," thus supplying in the title a quality which was notably lacking in the char-



acter of the body. The enterprise began in contention, continued in strife, and resulted in very little good and an untold amount of evil; and poor James O'Kelly, having wasted the best part of his life, died a disappointed, and, no doubt, a penitent man, on the 16th of October, 1826, in the 69th year of his age.

**Thomas Ware.**—One of the sturdiest and most efficient of Asbury's itinerants was Thomas Ware, already mentioned in connection with the Christmas Conference; a man in whom were mingled



THOMAS WARE.

some of the most substantial qualities of his English and Scotch ancestry. He was born at Greenwich, New Jersey, December 19, 1758. His Presbyterian mother carefully instructed him in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and, what was much more to the purpose, she trained him and the rest of the children to pray.

While he was yet a child his father died, leaving his mother with eight young children to provide for; and her great sorrow in bereavement was heightened by the doubt she often indulged as to whether she was one of the elect. "She was," says her son, "harassed with



fears that what she had taken for saving grace was nothing more than common grace;" a distinction which she had heard preached along with "effectual calling," and other Calvinistic inventions, by the expounders of that notable catechism of whose theology she was the victim.

About this time one of their neighbors, who had long been a member of the Church, had committed suicide in consequence of his doubts respecting his own election, which act was held to be conclusive evidence that this apparently good man had experienced nothing more than "common grace;" and the incident cast additional gloom upon the mind of Mrs. Ware, who argued from this sad circumstance the probability that she also had been "passed by" in the sovereign and eternal purposes of God's electing grace.

The gloom which rested upon the soul of his mother presently extended to her son Thomas, who was seized with a spirit of melancholy. He began to wander in lonely places, brooding over his griefs and fears; and when the two youngest of the family were taken away by death, he declares that he was troubled lest even they might not have been of the number of the elect.

About this time the Methodists began to be talked of in Greenwich, and the parish minister, fearing lest the pure minds of his people should be infected with the doctrine of Free Grace, (which was, doubtless, a damnable heresy, not being taught in the Shorter or Larger Catechism,) began to preach with additional emphasis on the Sovereignty of God, Election, Reprobation, and other such theories of doctrine as were likely to suffer damage at the hands of the itinerant preachers. However, there were two kinds of Methodists: the followers of Wesley and of Whitefield, and it was one of the latter class who first made his appearance in Greenwich; so that the fears of the old pastor, which had become excited by the near approach of the set of "wild, fanatical heretics," proved to be vain.

The war of the Revolution coming on young Ware, having arrived at military age, enlisted in the patriot army; but his soldierly duties in that slow-moving struggle left him plenty of leisure to reflect upon his spiritual condition. The term of his enlistment was a brief one, and after its close he began the study of navigation, intending to serve his country on the sea. About this time Pedicord, one of the chief



of the itinerants, coming into the place was announced to preach in the neighboring village of Mount Holly, and Ware determined to go and hear him. The result of this service Ware gives in his autobiography as follows:—

“Soon was I convinced that all men were redeemed and might be saved, and saved *now*, from the guilt, practice, and love of sin. With this I was greatly affected, and could hardly refrain from exclaiming aloud, ‘This is the best intelligence I ever heard!’”

On the next round of the itinerant Ware hastened to see him. Pedicord received him with joy, and began to pray for him with loving tears, and presently the soul of the young man was filled with unutterable delight, and he felt and knew that he was a new creature. With this experience of grace all his warlike taste departed, and many of his brethren began at once to tell him that they thought he was called to preach. His own opinion was, that his literary acquirements were too limited for such a work; nevertheless, on one occasion he filled, for a week, the appointments of George Mair, who was suddenly called from his circuit by sickness in his family, and on several other occasions had opened his mouth in exhortation with excellent effect.

In 1783 Mr. Asbury paid a visit to the Mount Holly Circuit, and sent for the young man, of whose parts and promise Pedicord had given him a favorable account, and upon examination, so well was he pleased with him that he at once laid claim to him for service on the Dover Circuit, where there was another preacher wanting. “You may tell the people, if you please,” said Asbury, “that you do not come in the capacity of a preacher, but only to assist in keeping up the appointments until another can be sent.”

“Here I was caught,” says Ware, in his autobiography, “and how could I decline? And being now regularly licensed to exhort, I told him, if he insisted on it, I would go and do the best I could; and early in September, 1783, I set my face toward the Peninsula with a heavy heart.”

The Dover Circuit was one of the choice portions of the Methodist vineyard. Here resided those eminent Christian ladies the wife of Counselor Bassett, and Mrs. White, wife of Judge White, already mentioned; both of whom encouraged the young preacher as true mothers



in Israel. After a successful term, which at that time was six months in length, Ware attended his first Conference, in Baltimore, in 1784, at which Asbury presided, and whom he describes as "excelling in prayer to such a degree that he sometimes disappointed the expectation thereby raised in his auditors in the sermon which followed." The Rev. Freeborn Garrettson has said of Bishop Asbury: "He prayed the most, and he prayed the best, of any man I ever knew;" and Ware records the opinion, that, "had he been equally eloquent in preaching he would have excited universal admiration as a pulpit orator."

The modest young neophyte was so struck with the superior powers of the preachers whom he met at this Conference that he was inclined to give up preaching, at least until he should become able to do it better; but his timidity was overruled by the pressure of the work, and from that time he bravely bore the banner of the cross through a long, varied, and useful career.

The timidity which at first was so noticeable in him was ultimately succeeded by an exceptional boldness and power. It is of this same Thomas Ware that the following anecdote is related:—

"Coming, one evening, to a farm-house on one of his frontier circuits, he sought its hospitality for the night; but the farmer, seeing by his dress that he was a minister, received him very gruffly, expressed his disgust that, of all men, a Methodist preacher should come to his house, and during the evening behaved so rudely and wickedly that Ware felt constrained to reprove him.

"The next day some of his neighbors were asking him about the preacher whom he had entertained over night.

"'He is a man of God,' said the farmer.

"'How do you know that?' they inquired.

"'Ah!' said the farmer, 'when he reproved me for my sins, I could feel the devil shake in me.'"

As specimens of the experience of the circuit riders appointed to the Holston country, west of the Alleghanies, the following, from the "Life of Ware," may be related:—

At the first Holston Conference, in 1788, the road by which the place of meeting was reached from the east was so infested with hostile Indians that it could not be traveled except by considerable com-



panies together. While the first comers waited for the Bishop and his party they held a protracted meeting, at which there were a large number of souls converted, among whom Ware mentions General Russell and lady; the latter a sister of the illustrious Patrick Henry.

At this Conference Ware was appointed to the East New River Circuit, among the mountains. On one of his rounds he encountered a fearful storm of snow and hail, in the teeth of which he was forced to traverse one of the mountain passes; a struggle which called for the exercise of all his strength and resolution.

It was near nightfall when he came within sight of the little hamlet, where he was sure of finding shelter; but, to his dismay, he found that a creek was so swollen that he could not cross it. The cold was intense, and becoming more and more severe every moment. His shouts for assistance were unanswered. Seeing some stacks of hay with a few cattle shivering around them, he fastened his horse on the leeward side of one of them, leaving him at liberty to eat, and crept into it to spend the night, unless some one should come to feed the cattle, who might ferry him over the creek.

It was soon dark, and no one came. His blood began to be chilled, and it was evident that if he remained where he was he would freeze to death before morning. The nearest shelter he knew of that he could reach was a sorry little hut which he had passed five miles back on his road; and thither he made his way.

When he reached the place he was so overcome with cold as to be almost unable to give account of himself and his wants; and the man in the cabin, evidently taking him for a drunken man, refused him hospitality. But Ware was already inside the door, and declared that he would stay in spite of them unless they were able to put him out by force. At length his unwilling host began to stir up the fire, and his young wife prepared him a comfortable supper.

In the morning, having discovered the ministerial character of their guest, they desired him to baptize their children, which he did; and then, mounting his horse, which had also received the good offices of the master of the cabin, the man accompanied him to a safe fording-place across the creek, and Ware pushed on to his next appointment. It was, however, a memorable night to him, for the fearful cold he



had suffered nearly cost him the loss of his feet, which, throughout the remainder of his life, gave him painful reminders of that terrible ride.

At another time, on the Casswell Circuit, in North Carolina, he mentions the fact that he was without money, that his coat was out at the elbows, and his boots completely useless; and the only means he knew of for replenishing his wardrobe was to sell his horse, for it appears that money in that region was very scarce, and as a rule but very little of it ever passed into the possession of the circuit riders. He could not endure the thought of parting with the faithful companion of so many toils and journeys, and to whose instinctive sagacity on at least one occasion he actually owed his life; and, therefore, resolved that nothing but death should separate them. This, however, soon occurred; for in a few days the noble animal, the only property he possessed in the world, sickened and died, leaving him on foot—a most wretched condition for an itinerant—several hundred miles from home, ragged, penniless, and proud.

The pride of these itinerants, however, consisted largely in that high sense of honor which, in spite of all privations, kept them from asking money for themselves. If God put it into the hearts of their people to give them any thing it was thankfully received; but a man of the stamp of Thomas Ware would sooner drown or freeze to death, than take up a collection for his own benefit in one of his public congregations: yet so far as food and shelter for themselves and their horses were concerned these servants of God had no hesitancy in quartering themselves upon the country; for this, they had the authority of the Lord himself; but for any thing more they waited till the Lord should send it. It is pleasant to know that while in such great straits one good brother furnished him a horse, and another, seeing his sad plight, gave him an order on his store in Newbern for such personal outfit as he required.

Wonders of grace accompanied the labors of Ware in his frontier circuits. In one place he gathered in six weeks a Society of eighty members, mostly heads of families, converted under his labors. At one of his quarterly meetings, on New River, thirty persons on one planter's estate were converted, twelve of whom were whites; and the revival pervaded a large district of country, in which, for weeks



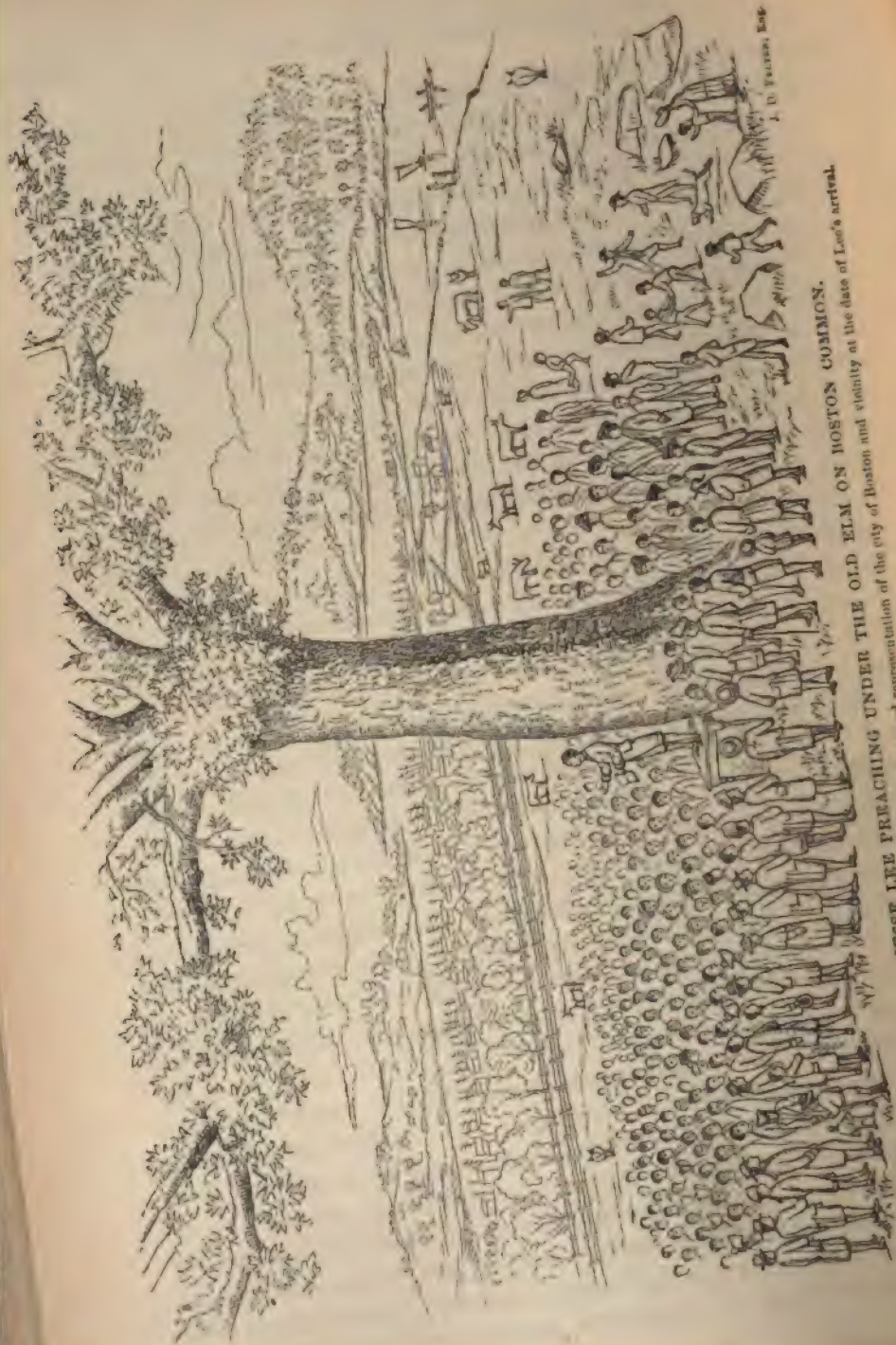
together, almost all worldly business was suspended, and the whole population gave themselves up to the services of religion.

At his last quarterly meeting, in Mecklenburg, North Carolina, he witnessed one of those scenes of wild and over-powering excitement wherein people fell prostrate under the power of God, both in the congregation within doors and among the crowds that had gathered under the surrounding trees. Loud cries for mercy were mingled with shouts of joyful deliverance; blatant scoffers were suddenly transformed into trembling penitents; and so great was the tumult at the eight o'clock love-feast, on Sunday morning, that preaching was out of the question; nor did there appear to be any need of it, for the whole multitude seemed to be subdued by the gracious influence, and with tearful eyes and melting hearts were ready to confess, "This is the work of God."

The last experience of Ware on his North Carolina Circuit shows that it was not from necessity but from choice that he suffered the loss of all things for Christ's sake. Among the converts on that memorable day just mentioned was a very aged couple, possessed of a large property, but with no children to inherit it. Even before their conversion they had become greatly attached to their preacher, and, on the eve of his departure, they desired him to write their will. To this he objected on the ground that he did not understand the proper form of such a document. They replied that their will was simply the bequest of all their worldly possessions to him on condition that he would stay with them and care for them during the remainder of their short stay on earth. "This," says Ware, "presented a strong inducement to exchange a life of poverty and toil for one of affluence and ease. But I could not do it with a good conscience; so I bid them and North Carolina adieu forever."

Ware was now a rising man in the Methodist fraternity, as is indicated by his appointment to Wilmington, in 1791, and to Staten Island the following year. He was the first man to propose a delegated General Conference, in view of the increasing difficulties of assembling all the elders from their widely-extended fields of labor. At the General Conference of 1812 he was elected Book Agent, which office he held for four years, when he again returned to the pastorate, in which form of service he spent the remainder of his life.





JESSE LEE PREACHING UNDER THE OLD ELM ON BOSTON COMMON.  
 at the date of Lee's arrival.





FIRST METHODIST PREACHING HOUSE IN BOSTON.

[From the supposed only picture in existence; for the loan of which the author's thanks are due to the Rev. Samuel H. Upham, D.D., of Boston.]

## CHAPTER XXI.

### EARLY METHODISM IN NEW ENGLAND.

#### **The First Methodist Societies in New England.—**

For a considerable number of years after Methodism was firmly established in other parts of the United States, even its name was scarcely known in New England. Garrettson and Black had passed through it, and preached in its chief city on their way to meet their brethren at New York or Baltimore; but the successors of the Pilgrims for many years appeared to regard this form of faith and order somewhat as the Hollanders do the sea, and against which they built up a system of social and ecclesiastical dykes, large ruins of which are visible unto this day. On three sides of this historic region the itinerants had early marked out their circuits, but it was not until the year 1791 that the "Bishop of North America" ventured to explore it. By this time there were a good many believers in free grace scattered along the valley of the Connecticut, and in some of the interior towns of Massachusetts between that river and Boston Bay.

One of these towns was Charlton, in Worcester County, where Elijah Batchelder, a soldier in the Continental army, had settled after



the close of his term of service; during which he had been converted under the labors of the itinerants. On his return from camp, in 1872, he began relating his experience to his neighbors in good Methodist fashion, in which simple story there was so much of interest that people from the surrounding towns came to hear him tell it; which humble labors resulted in quite a revival, and the organization of a Society that at one time had as many as forty members.

Growing out of the Charlton meetings an organization was effected in Southbridge, and subsequently in West Brookfield; but about the year 1810 there was a great rush of emigration from these towns to "The Ohio," as the far West of that day was called, in consequence of which the Societies were broken up and disappeared, and this form of religion did not reach the city of Worcester until 1830.

About the year 1792 a few Methodist meetings were held in Middlesex County, in the towns of Harvard, Milford, and Holliston; and soon afterward in Ashburnham, Fitchburgh, Orange, and a few of the southern towns in the State of New Hampshire; but these first beginnings were afterward required to be made over again.

In 1803 Bishop Asbury, on his tour through Massachusetts, passed through Milford, Needham, and Waltham, to Boston, where the Conference was held in the "solitary little chapel." The slow progress of the work in this part of the field grieved him, and he writes in his Journal these sorrowful words: "Poor New England, she is the valley of dry bones still. Come, O breath of the Lord, and breathe upon these slain that they may live!"

It is related of one Joseph Ball, a Baptist deacon, in central Massachusetts, that in the month of October, 1791, being then about to die, he called his son to his bedside and said to him: "My son, there will be another denomination established here, and you will know them by this, that they will preach a free salvation." Within a week this prophecy was fulfilled in the arrival of a Methodist itinerant, who of course preached "free salvation;" a doctrine which had been wholly lost sight of in New England. From Milford, where a Society was established, the itinerants extended their labors to the town of Harvard, where a preaching house was built—not finished, however; for when it was dedicated the minister was obliged to make use of a work-bench which the carpenters had left as a platform, on which he placed a



smaller bench as a pulpit. In memory of this incident one of the mothers in this Israel long afterward remarked: "In old times we had golden sermons from wooden pulpits, but now we have wooden sermons from golden pulpits." The historic inaccuracy of this excellent old woman will doubtless be pardoned on account of her wit.\*

**Methodism an Intruder in New England.**—The curse of State-churchism, in a modified form, had fallen upon this favored portion of free America.

The descendants of the Pilgrims were never in a mood to welcome religious intruders, whether Baptists, Quakers, or Methodists. They held New England as the portion of land which God had given to their fathers, both as a refuge from oppression and as a field in which to plant and propagate their peculiar views of religion; it was natural, therefore, that they should regard it as exclusively their own. The liberty of conscience for which they had braved the wilderness, did not at all imply the liberty of later arrivals in their colony to undermine or pull down the ecclesiastical structure which they and their fathers had reared with so much toil and pains; this was their State and their Church all in one, and the red Indian did not watch the encroachments of the pale-faces upon his hunting-grounds with more anxiety and jealousy than did the orthodox Churches of New England watch the efforts of the first itinerants to establish the Methodist order and the Arminian theology in their midst.

The land was divided into parishes and dotted over with meeting-houses, and it was held to be the duty of every citizen to support the Gospel just as much as to support the public roads or the public schools. The clergy were the ruling class in secular as well as in spiritual affairs. Many of them were settled for life; their salaries were raised by public taxes, which were collected by process of law from unwilling parishioners; and for years no one could hold office, or even vote, unless he were a member of a Church of "The Standing Order"—that is to say, Orthodox Congregationalism.

Even the sacraments had been degraded by an admixture of politics. Baptism was held to be the privilege of "all children of believ-

\* For the above facts relative to the first Methodist Societies in New England the author is indebted to the Rev. Dr. Dorchester, Secretary of the Historical Society of the New England Conference.



ers;" but presently the question arose whether both parents must be believers in order to the administration of this sacrament upon their offspring. To meet this somewhat delicate case the "Half-way Covenant," as it was called, was contrived; whereby, without a profession of personal piety, parents might signify their adherence to the doctrine and order of the Church, and thus secure the holy ordinance for their children.

The "venerable Stoddard," one of New England's leading divines, publicly defended the right of all intelligent and respectable persons to celebrate the Lord's Supper. In the Presbyterian Church in the Middle States, also, this sacrament was held to be the privilege of all baptized persons who were not heretical in opinion or scandalous in life; and the experience of conversion was not held to be essential either to Church membership or the ministerial office. As unquestionable proof of the sad decline of true religion in America may be cited in the words of the great Jonathan Edwards; who, referring to the condition of the Churches previous to "the great awakening," says:—

"The difference between the world and Church was vanishing away; Church discipline was neglected, and the growing laxness of morals was invading the Churches; and yet, never, perhaps, had the expectation of reaching heaven at last been more general or more confident."

This was previous to the great revival of 1740, under the labors of Edwards, Whitefield, Tennent, and others; which revival, however, produced so little permanent good that, three years afterward, the Annual Convention of Pastors in the Province of Massachusetts Bay, issued their protest ostensibly against their errors of the revival, but actually against the revival itself.\*

Dr. Edwards, for his opposition to the "Half-way Covenant," his bold denunciation of the sins of professed religionists, and his vigorous preaching of the doctrine of regeneration, was presently driven from his Northampton parish, and at last found an asylum among the remnant of one of the tribes of Massachusetts Indians; thus offering another illustration of the weakness, not to say wickedness, of a political form of religion.

One of the theological afflictions of New England, at this time,

\* STEVENS'S "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," vol. ii, p. 409.



was the New Divinity, which had already erected itself into a sect. Its chief distinctive doctrines were some very bold inferences from the Calvinistic theory of election; such as: that it is impossible for a soul in its natural condition to do any thing but sin; that even the efforts of unregenerate persons to bring themselves into a state of grace are only another form of sin; that the proper attitude of mind for all who are unsaved is to wait God's time, when, if they are of the number of the elect, he will call them with his "effectual calling;" that regeneration is the first work of the Holy Spirit upon the soul of the sinner, and therefore prayer, repentance, and faith, are useless until this work is accomplished. Asbury mentions several Churches which he had found established on the New Divinity plan, but they did not seem to be much more efficient as means of grace than the Old Divinity Churches, which, indeed, allowed a man to pray for pardon and regeneration if he felt moved thereto by the Holy Spirit; this being an evidence that he was probably one of the elect; nevertheless, if he were not chosen from all eternity unto eternal life all his prayers and penitence would avail him nothing. Whether his desire to flee from the wrath to come was divinely inspired, the Old Divinity offered the awakened sinner no means of determining, nor yet any means of knowing afterward, with any degree of certainty, whether he had been converted or not; that was a question only to be determined by the final disclosure, at the day of judgment, of the secret and sovereign will of God.

It has been the fashion in certain quarters to accuse the old-time clergy of New England of "savage orthodoxy," in view of their opposition to the Methodist movement; but a careful study of the situation will show another side to the shield. It was not so much the theology of Geneva and Westminster which they were defending as it was their political, financial, and social pre-eminence. Free grace and free will were bad enough, but free Churches were worse. There was too much freedom already; and if Methodist Churches, on the voluntary system, were to become numerous, there would doubtless be a still further falling off in parish revenues, and a further damage to their autocracy.

Nevertheless, the Methodists were destined to help rather than hinder the outward prosperity of the orthodox Churches, and, what



is of far more importance, to save them from being overwhelmed by the rising tide of Unitarianism.\*

**The Calvinistic Controversy Again.**—The Methodists on entering New England, opened their guns at once against its Calvinism; not, however, for the sake of controversy, but simply because sinners were wont to take refuge behind some of its teachings, and defend themselves thereby for their impenitence.

The itinerants thought it necessary, first of all, to show the sinner that on God's part there is absolutely no obstacle whatever to his salvation; and also, that the obstacles which are in the heart of the sinner himself God is constantly ready, willing, and anxious to overcome; on the only conditions whereby the work of saving grace is possible, namely, repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. "Methodism has a theology that can be preached," is a saying accredited to an eminent Congregationalist of our day,† and from first to last it has been preached; the whole of it; all the time, and without the slightest mental reservation. If, therefore, the providence of God is of any authority in determining his opinions and purposes, it must be evident that, as between the Calvinism of New England and the doctrine of free grace, the latter rather than the former is their most approved statement. By it God has chiefly carried on his work all over Christendom in this age which seems to be the harbinger of the millennium, while the theories which so long held men's souls in darkness and inaction have now nearly perished from the earth.

**Asbury among the Sons of the Pilgrims.**—On Saturday, the 4th of June, 1791, Bishop Asbury set out to explore New England. Having passed the last Methodist out-post in the State of New York, he entered the State of Connecticut; stopping the first night in the town of Reading. He appears to have projected this tour somewhat in the spirit of prophecy; for, on the first day, he writes in his Journal as follows:—

"Surely God will work powerfully among these people, and save thousands of them. . . . I feel faith to believe that this visit to New

\* Professor Mead, of Andover Theological Seminary, is credited by Dr. David Sherman with saying, in a public lecture, that Methodism saved Congregationalism from the tide of Unitarianism, turning the tide in favor of Orthodoxy.

† Joseph Cook.



England will be blessed to my own soul, and to the souls of others . . . I do feel as if there had been religion in this country once; and I apprehend there is a little in form and theory left. There may have been a praying ministry and people here; but I fear they are now spiritually dead; and am persuaded that family and private prayer is very little practiced. Could these people be brought to constant, fervent prayer, the Lord would come down and work wonderfully among them. I find my mind fixed on God and the work of God."

The next day he preached in the morning at Reading, to a congregation of about three hundred persons, who were assembled in a large barn; on which occasion he says, "I felt freedom, and the truth came clearly to my mind;" but in the evening at Newtown, twelve miles farther on, where a multitude of people were assembled in a Presbyterian meeting-house to hear him, he declared that he felt the power of Satan, and soon ended his feeble testimony.

On Monday he passed through Stepney, and on Tuesday reached Stratford, where he discovered a little Methodist Society, of which he says: "We met the class, and found some gracious souls. The Methodists have a Society consisting of twenty members, some of them converted; but they have no house of worship. They may now make a benefit of a calamity—being denied the use of other houses, they will the more earnestly labor to get one of their own. The Presbyterians and the Episcopalians have each one, and both are elegant buildings."

On the 9th of June he arrived at New Haven, that famous seat of learning, and his appointment to preach having been published in the newspapers, he had the honor of the President of Yale College, some of the faculty and students, and a few prominent citizens, to hear him. They all listened respectfully, but their coolness, as compared with the warm hospitality to which he had been accustomed on his episcopal journeys in the Middle and Southern States, led him to make the following entry in his Journal:—

"I talked away to them very fast. When I had done no man spoke to me. I thought to-day of dear Mr. Whitefield's words to Mr. Boardman and Mr. Pilmoor at their first coming over to America: 'Ah!' said he, 'if ye were Calvinists, ye would take the country before ye.' We visited the college chapel at the hour of prayer: I wished to go through the whole, to inspect the interior arrangements,



but no one invited me. The divines were grave, and the students were attentive; they used me like a fellow-Christian in coming to hear me preach, and like a stranger in other respects. Should Cokesbury or Baltimore ever furnish the opportunity, I, in my turn, will requite their behavior by treating them as friends, brothers, and gentlemen. The difficulty I met with in New Haven for lodging and for a place to hold meeting, made me feel and know the worth of Methodists more than ever."

The rapid growth of Christian courtesy and catholicity at once suggests itself in connection with this incident. It is but a short time since Bishop Simpson delivered his Lectures on Preaching before the theological department of this same university; his words being listened to with eager admiration, equalled only by the affection and reverence called forth by his personal character and representative position. A Methodist Bishop in 1879 is invited to instruct the candidates for New England Congregational pulpits in the manner and the power of gospel preaching: another prophecy and promise, among so many, of the speedy harmony and the ultimate unity of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From New Haven Asbury passed on into Rhode Island, reaching Newport on the 16th of June. Here he found two Presbyterian meeting-houses, one New Divinity, one Regular Baptist, one New-Light Baptist, one Sabbatarian, one Quaker, one Episcopal, and one Moravian house of Christian worship, besides a synagogue of the Jews. Thus it was evident that the people of Rhode Island had no lack of variety in the forms of religion; but in the opinion of Asbury there was still a want which only a Methodist Society could supply.

Two days after he came to Bristol, where he "found a degree of liberty" in preaching at the Court-house from the text, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost;" but he says: "I fear religion is extinguished by confining it too much to church and Sunday service and reading of sermons. I feel that I am not among my own people, although I believe there are some who fear God; and I find reason to hope that souls have gone to glory from this town." Indeed! and why not, pray?

At Providence he found a "few gracious souls," and he praises this Baptist city thus:—



"The people here appear to be prudent, active, frugal, cultivating a spirit of good family economy; and they are kind to strangers. They have had frequent revivals of religion: I had faith to believe the Lord would shortly visit them again, and that even we shall have something to do in this town."

From Providence he proceeded to Boston, thence along the coast to New Hampshire, and back again into New York by way of Worcester, Hartford, and Litchfield.

**Methodism in Boston.**—The first Methodist preacher ever seen in New England was Charles Wesley. In the month of September, 1736, the vessel on which he had taken passage from Charleston at the close of his brief missionary labors with General Oglethorpe's colony at Savannah, was driven by stress of weather into Boston Bay; and, being recognized, not as a Methodist, but as a minister of the Church of England, he was invited to address the congregation at King's Chapel, at that time the only Episcopal Church in Boston.

Four years later came George Whitefield, the Calvinistic Methodist, whose reputation had long preceded him as the prince of preachers, though he was not known in New England as a Methodist. There was no church in the little town of Boston which could contain the multitudes that flocked to hear him; and, on Saturday, the 20th of September, 1740, he sought the hospitable shade of the great elm, which then stood alone in the center of the open lot in the rear of the town; then, as now, called "The Common;" and here he preached one of his matchless sermons to a congregation of about eight thousand people, some of whom admired and blessed him while others cast out his name as evil. But Whitefield's administrations were little more than a marvel and a memory. They produced intense excitement, but left few permanent impressions, and for more than thirty years Boston eyes were not blessed with the sight of a Methodist preacher. In 1772 or '73 Richard Boardman, one of the first two missionaries sent out to America by Mr. Wesley, "wandered into Boston," and gathered a little company of spiritual worshipers, but when the missionary was gone the mission expired, and who those Methodists were, and what they were, no one now can tell.\*

\* HAMILTON'S "Memorial of Jesse Lee and the Old Elm."



In 1784, William Black, returning from the Christmas Conference at Baltimore, where he had been in search of reinforcements for Nova Scotia, stopped in the capital of the Bay State, hoping to plant therein a permanent Methodist Society; but the most of the churches were closed against him, and his ministry was limited to private families and public school-houses. "His labors, nevertheless, were encouraging and successful, and a small Society was organized in the older part of the town." Being compelled to return to Nova Scotia, he was permitted to preach his farewell sermon from the pulpit of the Rev. Dr. Elliot, in the new North Church, on which occasion his audience numbered more than two thousand persons. Before his departure he commended the Boston Society to the care of Bishop Asbury, but his letter was never received, and the little band were presently scattered among the other Churches of the town.

In the spring of 1788 Freeborn Garrettson, returning from his term of service in Nova Scotia, passed through the place, visiting those who were friendly, and endeavoring to revive the Society; but this effort also resulted in failure.

The Boston mind was calm, logical, averse to religious excitement. Even the eloquent Whitefield had been denounced by some of the Boston critics as a "vagrant," a "thief," and a "robber." Harvard University published its protest against him, and one Dr. Douglas declared that "every exhortation he delivered in Boston was a damage to the town of a thousand pounds."\* Thus the pioneers of Methodism in the Athens of America encountered a task of greater difficulty than that assigned to the explorers of the Holston country, or the missionaries to Choctaw Corner. It required good courage to face a hurricane of snow among the passes of the Alleghanies; but to face the cold self-satisfaction of this stronghold of Puritanism called for a courage and devotion which, even among Asbury's itinerant heroes, was not commonly found.

**Jesse Lee.**—There was, however, one man among them whose spirit was stirred within him at the thought of the repeated failures to evangelize the chief city of the East. As early as 1784 he had resolved to press the Bishop to send him into New England; but it was not until the spring of 1790 that he was permitted to set out for Boston,

\* HAMILTON'S "Memorial of Jesse Lee."



though he had traveled and preached extensively in western Massachusetts and Connecticut during the previous year.

Jesse Lee was born in Prince George's County, Virginia, in 1758, and entered the itinerant ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1783. To compass the life and character of such a man within the limits of a book is manifestly impossible. His was one of those generous, capacious, splendidly-endowed natures which challenges admiration no less than it discourages all attempts at description. To the warmth and energy of his southern blood was added a readiness of wit worthy of a thoroughbred Irishman, and a keenness and sagacity which would have done no discredit to a canny Scotchman, or the best product of the very focus of New England life.

His parents were parishioners of Jarratt, the evangelical Episcopal pastor, and one of the few men in America who preached a present, personal, and conscious salvation; and under his ministry young Lee, in his fifteenth year, was brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. At nineteen he was a class-leader in North Carolina, whither he went to manage the farm of a widowed relative; and in 1784, at the invitation of Bishop Asbury, he adjusted his affairs, equipped himself with horse, saddle-bags, Bible, and Hymn Book, and started out on a career which has made his name immortal. The next year he was invited to accompany the Bishop on his tour through the South, where he made the acquaintance of a Massachusetts man who gave him such a description of New England life, manners, and theology, as filled him with an irrepressible desire to become a missionary among that highly civilized but poorly evangelized people.

The appointment of Jesse Lee to New England, at the New York Conference of 1789, was a case of special adaptation of the man to his work. He was possessed of a courage which nothing could daunt; it doubtless amounted to impudence in the estimation of the Boston mind, which was by no means flattered at the idea of a man coming to them as a missionary from among the mountains of Virginia; his style of address was full of shrewdness as well as of force, whereby he could win the respect and rivet the attention of any audience, especially a Boston audience; and withal, he had such faith in the divineness of his mission, and in the power of the Gospel which he was sent to preach, that his words went straight to the hearts of his hearers, put-



ting them at once on the defensive if they were inclined to controversy, or carrying them completely with him if they were honest seekers after the truth.

He was a man of magnificent presence, much above the ordinary size; he had the manners of a southern gentleman; his voice was musical or mighty, at pleasure, and he could sing the Methodist hymns in a manner which left him little use for Church bells to call together his congregation. His education was not so extensive as the uses he made of it, but it served the purposes of his ministry, and left no cause of complaint even among a people with whom a collegiate training was regarded as indispensable in a minister of the Gospel.

At one of his first preaching-places in Connecticut, on his way to Boston, he was asked by his hostess if he possessed a liberal education; to which he replied: "Tolerably liberal; enough, I think, to carry me through the country."

On another occasion he applied to a minister for permission to preach in his church; and the pastor, anxious to know whether he were a learned man before admitting him to his pulpit, addressed him a question in Latin. This was quite beyond Lee's literary latitude; but, while on his North Carolina Circuit, he had picked up a little of the speech of the Dutch mountaineers, in which language he gravely replied to the question.

The pastor was surprised, but not satisfied; accordingly he repeated the question, this time in Greek, to which Lee responded with some more Dutch; which language, being unknown to the pastor, he imagined it might be Hebrew, of which he was himself ignorant; and, on the presumption that Lee was the better scholar of the two, he granted him the use of his pulpit.

On the first round of his Connecticut Circuit Lee was frequently treated with rudeness, sometimes approaching to violence. The majority of the ministers warned the people against him as a pestilent heretic, whom it was the duty of all good Christians to thrust out of their neighborhood as soon as possible; alleging that he had come to break up the Congregational Churches and drive away their ministers. When in Fairfield, Conn., it became known that there were three women who intended to join his Society, there was great excitement



and alarm, and a convention comprising forty-five ministers and ninety deacons was held, with a view to forming a compact combination against the intruders.

The next year Lee was re-enforced from the ranks of the old Baltimore Circuit by three preachers—Jacob Brush, George Roberts, and Daniel Smith. These he left in charge of the circuit which he had already organized, while he himself made a long excursion through the States of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, and back again to Connecticut. All this while his eye was fixed upon Boston, and, having resolved to pay a visit to this place, he was not a little delighted on his journey thither to fall in with the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, who was on his return from Nova Scotia, whither he had been on a missionary tour. The hearts of these sturdy itinerants were gladdened at this providential meeting. They passed the night together, and the next morning Lee passed on to Boston, where he arrived on the 9th of July, 1790.

For several days he persistently sought for a preaching-place, but no door was opened to him. Why he should have expected Boston to open its doors for Methodist preaching does not appear. It certainly was not conscious of wanting any thing in the way of religious instruction. But Boston was always ready to listen to almost any thing new in the way of philosophy or religion, provided it was clearly and eloquently set forth; and bethinking him of the method which he had so successfully used elsewhere, he gave notice of his intention to preach on the Common on the afternoon of the ensuing Sabbath. He managed to borrow a table and have it conveyed to a convenient spot under the old elm, and at the appointed time he mounted this rude pulpit and began, as usual, to sing a congregation together. Then, kneeling on his table, he offered a simple and fervent prayer. "When he entered into the subject-matter of his text," says one who was present, "it was such an easy, natural flow of expression, and in such a tone of voice, that I could not refrain from weeping, and many others were effected in the same way. When he was done, and we had an opportunity of expressing our views to each other, it was agreed that such a man had not visited New England since the days of Whitefield. I heard him again and thought I could follow him to the ends of the earth." His congregation on this occasion was esti-



mated at between two and three thousand people, and they all gave him a quiet and respectful attention.

The success of his first effort at preaching under the old elm was so great that he was encouraged to continue his ministry there during a considerable part of the summer; and at length, in one of the alleys of the town, a place was found where it was permitted to build a Methodist house of worship. This first Methodist preaching house in New England was built with money begged by Lee in southern cities, and carried to the builders with his own hands. [See cut at the head of this chapter.]

In Lynn a more hospitable reception was accorded to him, and there he formed his first Society in Massachusetts, February 20, 1791; consisting of eight members. On the 27th of the same month it had increased to twenty-nine members, and in May following more than seventy persons took certificates of their attendance on his ministry—a measure rendered necessary by the laws of the State, in order to secure them from taxation for the support of the clergy of the “standing order.”

This fact will serve to illustrate the actual *status* of the Congregational Churches in New England. By the terms of agreement made between the Church and parish on one hand, and the minister about to be settled on the other, the salary of the minister was a legal claim upon the property of the people of the town, and a tax was assessed upon them by the parish authorities to raise it. No one was exempted from this tax unless he certified to the parish authorities that he “did duty” in connection with some other established religious Society. Thus the formation of other Societies within the territory tributary to “the standing order,” furnished an opportunity for disaffected persons to take themselves and their property out from under the operation of the Church tax law; on which account, as has been suggested, the setting up of any new religious organization was a serious affair, financially as well as theologically.

At the Conference of 1791, which opened in New York, May 26th, the appointments for New England were as follows: Jesse Lee, Elder; Litchfield—Matthias Swain, James Covell; Fairfield—Nathaniel B. Mills, Aaron Hunt; Middlefields—John Allen, George Roberts; Hartford—Lemuel Smith, Menzies Rainor; Stockbridge—Robert Green;



Lynn—John Bloodgood, Daniel Smith: one district and six circuits, four of them in Connecticut and two in Massachusetts, with eleven circuit preachers and one presiding elder.

The first Methodist Society in Boston was organized on the 13th of July, 1792.

**The First Conference in New England** was held at Lynn, commencing August 3d, 1792. There were eight persons present besides Bishop Asbury, among whom were Jesse Lee, who was now exulting in having gained a permanent foot-hold in this unpromising region; Hope Hull, "the Summerfield of his time;" Rainor, fresh from the revivals of the Hartford Circuit; Allen, the Boanerges, as his brethren called him; and, probably, Lemuel Smith and Jeremiah Cosden.

Extensive revivals were reported in the region of Lynn and Pittsfield, in Massachusetts, and of Reading and Hartford, in Connecticut, and of Albany, in New York, and the number of members reported was one thousand three hundred and fifty-eight, showing a gain of nearly nine hundred for the Conference year, which was, however, about fifteen months in length. Notwithstanding the general prejudice against the new Church, invitations for preachers began to come in from various quarters. Jesse Lee was returned as Presiding Elder to New England for another year, in which territory were the following circuits: Lynn, Boston, Needham, Providence, Fairfield, Litchfield, Middletown, Hartford, and Pittsfield. This last circuit was, however, on the Albany District and under the presiding eldership of Garrettson. The Providence District, of which Jacob Brush was the Presiding Elder, embraced a part of the State of New York, as well as considerable portions of Connecticut.

The membership on some of the Eastern circuits was still very small. After all his labors in Boston, Lee had thus far gathered only fifteen members, and at Needham, thirty-four. At Lynn, however, which from the first was a garden-plot for the Methodists, one hundred and eighteen members were reported—a gain of sixty in a single year. Middletown, Connecticut, reported one hundred and twenty-four members, and Hartford, nearly two hundred—one hundred and sixty of whom were brought in during this year.

Having established Societies in Boston, Lynn, and the surrounding



country, Lee pushed next his outposts over into the Province of Maine, then a part of Massachusetts, consisting chiefly of dense forests, with a narrow fringe of settlements along the sea-coast and a few small towns on the rivers in the interior. Lee, as has already been noticed, was a man of magnificent proportions, physically as well as mentally; an advantage by no means to be despised, yet sometimes a disadvantage as well. There were now but few roads through the Province of Maine, and much of his journey lay along bridle-paths which were beset with rocks and fallen timber, and crossed by broad streams, most of them innocent of bridges. No one horse was equal to the itinerancy on this occasion, and Lee provided himself with two good animals, which he tired out by turns. In this way he explored this new country in all directions, preaching at York, Wells, Portland, Newcastle, Waldo-borough, and Thomaston. The farthest point inland that he reached was Old Town. As the result of this tour of observation he organized a circuit west of the Kennebec River, which he called Readfield, after the name of one of its principal appointments, where the first Conference of the Province of Maine was held in 1798.

In 1794 Phillip Wager was placed on the Readfield Circuit, while Lee took the general oversight of the work, and devoted himself to further explorations. The region beyond the Penobscot was to him a *terra incognita*, into whose mysterious depths he was desirous to penetrate. Passing up that river, which he crossed at Orrington, he traveled eastward, crossing the Union River at Ellsworth; thence winding around Frenchman's Bay, to Machias, on the border of New Brunswick, whence he passed over to St. Stevens, and thence to the city of St. John, on the Bay of Fundy, the principal port of the British Province of New Brunswick.\* Having made himself historic by his work in New England, Lee returned again to the South, thenceforth to be honored as the most brilliant Methodist of his time.

For some years previous to the General Conference of 1800 Lee assisted Bishop Asbury in holding Conferences, visiting the Societies, and preaching throughout the Connection from Maine to Georgia, and, in the judgment of many of his brethren, he was the most suitable man for Bishop; but when the Conference came to vote there was a tie between Lee and Whatcoat, and on the third ballot the latter was

\* SHERMAN's sketch of Jesse Lee, in "New England Divines."



elected by a majority of four. There does not appear to have been any mere party division in the case. The chief distinction between the men was this: Lee was brilliant, energetic, sound in judgment, and evidently born to success; Whatcoat was gentle, lovable, and pious; and in this first contest piety triumphed over talent, and the precedent was set that the evident favor of God should be held as the highest qualification for the chief office in the Methodist Communion.

Lee took his defeat with great good humor. A friend suggested to him that probably he was thought to be too witty for a Bishop; to which he replied, "You would not expect me to assume the gravity of a Bishop previous to my election."

In 1809 Lee was chosen chaplain to the House of Representatives, at Washington, an office which he held until 1815, and which he then resigned to satisfy the scruples of certain brethren who thought this to be too near an approach to secular work for a man who had taken the vows of a Methodist preacher.

His death occurred in September, 1816, at the age fifty-eight, and his grave, in the Mount Olivet Cemetery, in Baltimore, was honored with a simple monument, which has recently been replaced by an elegant shaft of Scotch granite, erected in this chief mausoleum of his Church in America, by his spiritual descendants in Boston and vicinity. [See page 597.]

**The Wesleyan Academy**, one of the oldest schools of the Church, was established by the New England Methodist preachers at



Boarding House.

Principal's Residence

WESLEYAN ACADEMY, WILBRAHAM, MASS.



New Market, N. H., in 1818, from whence it was removed to Wilbraham, Mass., in 1825.

Its first principal, after the removal, was Wilbur Fisk, D.D. His successors have been as follows: W. M<sup>r</sup>K. Bangs, A.M., 1831-32; John Foster, A.M., 1832-34; David Patten, D.D., 1834-41; Charles Adams, D.D., 1841-45; Robert Allyn, D.D., 1845-48; Minor Raymond, D.D., 1848-64; Edward Cooke, D.D., 1864-74; Nathaniel Fellows, A.M., 1874-79; George M. Steele, 1879.

**Minor Raymond, D.D.**—A glance at the above list of names and dates will show to whose hand the task has chiefly fallen of shaping the character, earning the reputation, and guiding the course of this historic school. In its halls more than fifteen thousand young



Old Academy.

Fisk Hall.

Binney Hall.

WESLEYAN ACADEMY, WILBRAHAM, MASS.

men and women have received instruction; in its services of religion hundreds upon hundreds have been converted; and to the talent it has developed and the intelligent piety it has inculcated the Methodism of America doubtless owes more than to any other of its literary institutions. From 1848 to 1864 Minor Raymond was, humanly speaking, its leading spirit and its motive power; under his administration it attained a New England, if not a national, reputation; by his labors and the gifts of its wealthy friends, Rich, Claflin, Sleeper, and other Massachusetts Methodists of smaller fortunes but equally generous hearts, it outgrew its three modest houses, and entered into the spacious halls which these pages represent. Twice has its boarding house



risen from its ashes; the last fire destroying a new structure scarcely inferior to the one here shown; but these swift and crushing calamities in nowise swerved the sturdy purpose or jarred the serene equanimity of the man to whose head and heart their existence was chiefly due. Presently a third home for his great family was ready; whereupon, feeling that his work for this school had been well and faithfully done, he bade good-bye to New England, and gave himself, first to the West, as Professor of Systematic Theology in the Garrett Biblical Institute, at Evanston, Illinois, and then to the whole Church, in his three volumes of Theology and Moral Philosophy. If the number of his pupils, the service he has rendered them, and the love they bear him be fair bases of reckoning, then Minor Raymond has no superior among educators in our Church; though there is among its large and admirable force of presidents and professors one other name which fast approaches his—that of the Methodist Plato, Erastus O. Haven, D.D., LL.D., a Boston man, now also claimed both by the East and West.

Dr. Raymond was born in the city of New York, August 29, 1811, but nearly the whole of his life until 1864 was spent in New England, either as student, professor, pastor, or principal. By transfer from the New England Conference he is now a member of the Rock River Conference, both of which he has represented in the General Conference.

**The Wesleyan University**, the first of the long list of Methodist colleges in America, will hardly be recognized by its early *alumni* in the present array of spacious edifices, [see page 557,] which attest the love and liberality of its graduates and other noble friends.

In the year 1830 the original buildings, North College and South College, which had been erected for a military academy, came into the possession of the New York and New England Conferences; in 1831 a charter was obtained, and the University opened its doors and offered its services to aid in the training of students, who hitherto had been obliged to seek outside their Church the advantages of higher education.

**Wilbur Fisk, D.D.**, the Fletcher of America, whose courtly manner, saintly spirit, and approved success as an educator, pointed him out as the man for this important charge, commenced his labors therein in the autumn of 1831, and closed them with the close of his peaceful and almost perfect life, in 1839.



His character was a rich treasury of the brightest, the sweetest, and the purest thoughts and actions, and both as an educator and a preacher he has been set down as an ideal man. At the age of twenty he entered the University of Vermont, in which State he was born at Brattleborough, on the 31st of August, 1792; and after his graduation in 1815 commenced the study of law. A severe illness, which endangered his life, revived the religious impressions of which he had been the subject while yet a child, and feeling himself called to the ministry, he joined the New England Conference in 1818.



WILBUR FISK, D.D.

From the Presiding Eldership of the Vermont District he was, in 1826, elected President of the Wilbraham Academy, where he made his first reputation as a preceptor, and from which position he ascended to the President's Chair of the Wesleyan University. Through his untiring efforts, as well as through the marvelous attractions of his personal character, the new college soon began to exercise a wide and blessed influence. The young men who had the good fortune to be under his instruction and government learned to love him,



and for love's sake to obey him, since it was evident that he was devoted, body and soul, to the work of making the most of his pupils for the Lord and for the Church. As a preacher he was every-where admired; as a Christian he was honored, and almost envied. For many years he professed the high attainment of perfect love, and his daily life and conversation were such as proved the work of the sanctifying Spirit upon him. Few men have been so happy in their friendships, and few so spotless in their fame.



Orange Judd Hall  
of Natural Science.

Observatory.  
Library.

Chapel.

Gymnasium.  
South College.

North College.

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY, MIDDLETOWN, CONN.

In 1828, while Principal of the Wesleyan Academy, he was elected Bishop of the Canada Methodist Episcopal Church, which office he felt compelled to decline. Again, in 1836, his own Church elected him one of its Bishops, but he modestly and conscientiously refused the office, saying, "If my health will allow me to perform the work of the Episcopacy I dare not accept it, for I believe I can do more for the cause of Christ where I am than I could do as a Bishop." If any



other man has twice declined such honors as these his name has not appeared in our Church history.

Dr. Fisk was an able writer, as appears from his works: "The Calvinistic Controversy," "Travels in Europe," "Sermons and Lectures on Universalism," etc.; but his great popular power was in the pulpit, where he found his way straight to the hearts of his hearers. His manner was simple and natural; it was more like earnest conversation than like ordinary pulpit oratory; his words contained the richest imagery of thought, and breathed a spirit of sublime devotion, by which he lifted his hearers out of themselves up to the high plane of his own spiritual life. No excitement accompanied his sermons, no impetuous passion swept through his congregations, but people listened with their hearts as well as their ears, as if the lips of the speaker had indeed been touched with a live coal from off the altar of God; and when the records of the unseen world are brought forth and read, doubtless it will appear that to Wilbur Fisk has been given fully as many seals of his ministry as to some of those sons of thunder whose words, indeed, caused multitudes to quake and tremble, but the echoes whereof too quickly rolled away.

For years he struggled with a fatal pulmonary disease, and died at Middletown, Conn., on the 22d of February, 1838. His dust reposes in the college burying-ground, surrounded now by the forms of many who have here fallen out of the race for earthly honors, while his memory dwells in the hearts of the older Methodists of the East, who think of him almost as a re-appearance of the beloved Apostle John.

**Stephen Olin, D.D.**, is another of the historic presidents of the Wesleyan University. In 1842 he succeeded Dr. Nathan Bangs in the chair of the lamented Fisk, and, like him, died at his post in 1851. He was a native of Vermont; a graduate of Middlebury College, where he won first honors; an experienced preceptor; a tourist in Egypt and the Holy Land, of which tour he published two volumes of admirable notes; a vigorous thinker; a mighty orator, and, withal, a man of a simple, transparent, godly soul, which was evidently too large for his body, for he died of nervous exhaustion, at Middletown, at the age of fifty-four.

His posthumous works were edited and published by his accomplished wife, Mrs. Julia M. (Lynch) Olin, in 1852; his "Life and Let-



ters," in 1853, and a work entitled "Greece and the Golden Horn," in 1854.

Dr. Olin was succeeded in 1851 by Prof. William Aug. Smith, LL.D., eminent as an instructor in mathematics; who, on his retirement in 1857, was succeeded by Joseph Cummings, D.D., LL.D., under whose administration, during seventeen years, those three fine edifices the Memorial Chapel, the Library, and the Orange Judd Hall of Natural Science were erected. The Library Hall was the gift of the late Isaac Rich, Esq., of Boston. The library contains nearly thirty thousand volumes, and a fund has been-provided for its regular increase.\*



STEPHEN OLIN, D.D.

In 1875 Dr. Cummings was succeeded by the Rev. Cyrus D. Foss, D.D., a scholarly man in the early prime of his life, a Wesleyan graduate, with first honors, in the class of '54, and a member of the New York Conference.

\* The author acknowledges his obligation to President Foss for free access to the rich and voluminous collection of Methodist books, pamphlets, etc., contained in the University Library, comprising every obtainable early publication in England, great and small, which is of historic value, either as attacking or defending the great Wesleyan movement.



In 1872 the institution was opened to women, quite a number of whom have graduated with distinction. The whole number of its graduates is now nearly twelve hundred, a large proportion of whom have entered the service of the Church.

**Zion's Herald.**—New England, the hot-bed of ideas, the school-house of the nation, claims the honor of founding the first Methodist newspaper in the world.



WESLEYAN ASSOCIATION BUILDING.

[Bromfield-street, Boston.]

"Zion's Herald" was commenced in January, 1823, in Boston, by a few Methodist preachers and laymen. In June of the same year it was officially recognized, and in September, 1824, purchased by the New England Conference, by which body it was sold to the Book Concern at New York in 1828. In 1831 the Wesleyan Association, a Methodist body of twenty members, was organized for the purpose

of publishing a paper for New England, and another "Zion's Herald," with the addition, in 1841, of the "Wesleyan Journal," was issued, in which name and style it continued until 1848, when the last title was dropped, and it became plain "Zion's Herald;" the New York organ of Methodism having, meanwhile, become "The Christian Advocate and Journal."

"The Boston Wesleyan Association," says Dr. Newhall, in his address at the semi-centennial "Herald" celebration, in 1873, "without securing the least pecuniary profit from this enterprise, or compensation for their services, often, on the other hand, being obliged to stand individually under heavy financial responsibilities, simply from love of the Gospel as taught by Methodism, have for these last forty-two years maintained an independent Methodist paper in Boston. Be it also known, that, more than to any other cause, it is due to the energy, prudence, and faithfulness of Franklin Rand, who put the best thirty years of his life into the "Herald," that it has been a financial success." Among its editors appear the familiar names of Abel Stevens, Daniel Wise, E. O. Haven, N. E. Cobleigh, Gilbert Haven, and Bradford K. Peirce; the last-named being the present incumbent of its editorial



chair, who has filled it since 1872. The present publishing agent is Alonzo S. Weed, Esq., who has served since 1871.

**The Boston University**, whose foundation is intended to comprise a complete system of affiliated colleges in all departments of learning, was incorporated in 1869, its financial basis being furnished by the munificent bequest of the late Isaac Rich, and the further benefactions of Lee Claflin and Jacob Sleeper.

The following are colleges and schools already in operation, and the dates of their establishment, respectively :—

College of Liberal Arts.....	March 14, 1873.
College of Music.....	July 3, 1873.
College of Agriculture .....	Feb. 11, 1875.
School of Theology.....	May 3, 1871.
School of Law .....	Feb. 17, 1873.
School of Medicine.....	Feb. 15, 1873.
School of Oratory.....	June 17, 1873.
School of All Sciences.....	April 9, 1874.

In all departments women enjoy all the privileges of men. It is the first university in the world organized upon this principle. The College of Liberal Arts has fixed a higher standard of admission than has heretofore been maintained in any American or English university, and for some years the number of students in the three professional schools of Theology, Law, and Medicine has exceeded the aggregate number of professional students of any other American university maintaining the same courses of study.

The School of Theology was projected in Boston, in 1839; opened in Concord, N. H., as the Methodist General Biblical Institute, in 1847; removed to Boston, and reorganized as the Boston Theological Seminary, in 1867. Since 1871 it has been the Theological Department of Boston University. This department occupies the rooms and halls of the Boston Wesleyan Association. The president, Rev. Dr. W. F. Warren, is well known as an instructor, and by his writings, both in the United States and in the German missions of our Church. He is assisted by an able faculty in each department.\*

\* SIMPSON'S "Cyclopedia." The names of the other Methodist schools in New England appear in the proper statistical table at the end of this volume.



**Father Taylor, the Sailor Preacher of Boston.—**

From the forecastle of a coasting schooner to the position of the foremost pulpit genius in America seems a long distance, yet over all this distance this fatherless and motherless waif—Edward T. Taylor—has passed; and after a career as wild and as free as the ocean itself, this man, who did not even know his own birthday, entered into heaven and history on the 6th of April, 1871.



EDWARD T. TAYLOR.

To the best of his recollection he first discovered himself in the neighborhood of Richmond, Va., in the household of a lady to whom he had been given away. He was a preacher born. In his childhood he used to gather a congregation of the negro boys and girls belonging to the plantations about him, and preach to them most pathetic-



ally; sometimes taking for his theme the mortal remains of a kitten or chicken which had died in the course of nature or had been assisted to death for the occasion, and so vivid a picture was this young orator able to draw of the sufferings and virtues of the deceased that he actually brought tears to the eyes of his auditors; though it is said that if they failed to give this evidence of appreciation of his oratorical efforts he would rush down from his temporary pulpit and bring out tears by other means.

One day, when he was about seven years old, while he was picking up chips for his foster-mother, a sea-captain passed along, who, taking a fancy to the boy, asked him if he did not want to be a sailor; and the impetuous lad, suddenly inspired with a love for a sea-faring life, left his chips and his home, and started off without giving his guardian the slightest notice.

His first voyage of which there is any record was to the port of Boston, in 1811, when he was about seventeen years of age; at which time the metropolis of New England was a lively little town of about thirty thousand inhabitants. Unlike many other young mariners, Taylor was a steady and temperate lad, and having received permission to go ashore, instead of making for some of the dens and dives where so many sea-faring men were spoiled and plundered, he took a tramp through the town and brought up, without intending it, at the old Bromfield-street Church, where Elijah Hedding—afterward bishop—was preaching a sermon from the words, "But he lied unto him." There was an immense crowd about the door, and the sailor boy, finding no chance of entrance, climbed in at the window, and at the close of the sermon, which impressed him most deeply, one of the brethren, seeing his condition of mind, invited him to go to the altar for prayer. This he did, and not long afterward he met with a joyful experience of saving grace, which he briefly describes as follows: "I was dragged through the lubber hole, brought down by a broadside from the seventy-four Elijah Hedding, and fell into the arms of Thomas W. Tucker."

The Methodist meetings in those times were by no means remarkable for their stillness, and young Taylor, having learned to sing and shout in the midst of storms and hurricanes, was able to make his full share of religious noise in the meetings at the old Bromfield-street



Church. His conversion was, however, recognized as genuine and thorough, and he was permitted to enjoy great liberty. He was so ignorant that he could not read the words in a plain English sentence; but when he fell upon his knees to talk with his Father in heaven he displayed such a simplicity, and withal such a rich imagination and familiar acquaintance with spiritual things, that he presently became quite a favorite.

After a voyage on a privateer during the war of 1812 Taylor returned to Boston, and having had enough of the sea, he settled down on shore as a junk peddler, in which mercantile line, equipped with a cart well stocked with tinware, and provided with proper receptacles for rags and old iron, he traveled about the country, buying and selling, preaching and praying, and growing in grace and knowledge. Sometime in the year 1814, a pious old lady named Sweetzer, in the sea-coast town of Saugus, took a liking to the young peddler, and offered him employment in the care of her little farm; which being more to his liking than the junk business, he left the cart and settled down as a farmer.

Of course such a zealous young man could not be silent, and when his talents became known he was invited to preach in the old Rock School-house, in East Saugus; where, for a considerable length of time he amused bad people and edified good ones; using such plain language as he had picked up on sea and shore; devoting himself betimes with absolute desperation to the work of reading and committing to memory the texts of Scripture which were to be the foundation of his discourses, and the first two lines of the hymns which he intended to give out to be sung. Some rude fellows, of the baser sort, would occasionally attend his meetings in the Rock School-house to make disturbance, but Taylor always found ready hands to defend him. Many a time he tore along at the top of his voice with his rough and ready sermon while the rowdies of the neighborhood were howling without, or stamping and groaning within. In the spring of 1817 Taylor had the good fortune to fall in with that eminent, wealthy, and liberal Methodist, Amos Binney, who, seeing the genius of the young man, sent him to the New Market Seminary, which was then the only Methodist school in America. The proper studies, of course, for a pupil of his limited acquirements were the simple rudiments of the English language; but



Taylor was a man in stature and in spirit, if not in scholarship, and therefore, instead of giving himself to reading and spelling, and the rules of English grammar, he plunged into philosophy, astronomy, and other high departments of learning, with which he struggled like a hero for a period of six weeks; after which, feeling more and more the pressure of his call to the pulpit, he bade good-bye to the school; having, however, in that short time reached the highest honors, and been appointed to deliver the valedictory address. Thenceforth he was wholly innocent of any scholastic training or restraint.

The New England Conference, in 1819, was composed of about one hundred members, with appointments scattered all over the New England States, and as a member of this Conference Taylor ranged as a circuit preacher until 1829, when he was appointed chaplain to the seamen, under the auspices of the Boston Port Society; a position in which his name was destined to become a household word in many lands and over all seas. While his Bethel was building Taylor commenced his labor in the old Methodist Alley Church, now Hanover-street; which would accommodate but five or six hundred hearers; where he often preached four times a day. The chapel soon became too strait for his audience. Crowds of sailors from the sea, and crowds of landmen from the shore, thronged the plain old-fashioned chapel, and presently the untutored preacher in his humble church became the acknowledged prince of pulpit orators in the learned and critical city of Boston. From a wandering circuit rider he had become the city's favorite, and it was often necessary for him to demand that his wealthy and elegant hearers, who were likely to monopolize the sittings of his Bethel, should give place to his "boys," as he called the sailors, whose rights he was ever ready to defend.

It is said that he seldom thought out, and certainly never wrote out, his matchless sermons. Those flashes of rhetoric which gave him place as the foremost pulpit genius of America were sudden inspirations, sometimes as startling as the lightning itself, and apparently as inexhaustible in variety and beauty as the pictures in sunset skies. It was not the quaintness of his speech nor yet its bluntness—which was sometimes absolutely shocking—that brought the scholarly Bostonians to have their spirits swept by his hurricanes: they had the sense to discern in him a marvelous gift from God to see things which no other



man could see, and to say things as no one else could say them. Such a man would, of course, be guilty of what, in ordinary persons, would be called extravagance, but in all his sky-piercing rhetoric there was always some perfectly evident practical lesson which was thus brought home to the understanding and conscience of his hearers.

Father Taylor was never tired of praising that class of men who go down to the sea in ships. He declared that it was impossible to make a sailor out of an ordinary man. "Sailors' hearts," said he, "are as big as an ox's and open like a sunflower; and they carry them about in their right hand ready to give them away." Again, "sailors' hearts are as big and sweet as sugar hogsheads," but they "cut off the bottom of their pockets with a rum bottle." From first to last this child of the sea was a sailor. His pulpit was his quarter-deck. While he talked to his sailors in nautical phrase they could almost hear the sighing of the wind through the rigging over their heads, and feel the rocking of the ship on the waves, though it was anchored hard and fast on a good foundation of Quincy granite.

Another notable trait in his character was his catholicity. He was on excellent terms with all his orthodox brethren, and his heart was capacious enough, after they had been properly stowed, to take in Universalists, Unitarians, Roman Catholics, and, indeed, "all sorts and conditions of men," except those whose small natures were wholly occupied with their own opinions. On one occasion an orthodox minister declined to sit with Father Taylor in his pulpit because it had once been occupied by the Unitarian, Henry Ware; whereupon the old seaking fell upon his knees and prayed thus: "O Lord, there are two things that we want to be delivered from in Boston; one is bad rum and the other is religious bigotry; which is worse thou knowest, and I don't. Amen."

Yet Father Taylor was by no means loose in his doctrinal notions. In theology, he was a sturdy Methodist, and, like all the early New England preachers, he felt called to do battle with Calvinism. On one occasion, after listening to a preacher of this creed, who was insisting upon the impossibility of saving the non-elect, Father Taylor inquired, "When did you hear from Jesus Christ last?" To another, who was setting forth some of the hardest inferences from the hard Geneva doctrines, he responded: "There is no use talking, brother;



your God is my devil. Give him my compliments." If any other man had spoken such words they would have been taken as an insult, but Father Taylor was privileged by common consent to say what he liked, since, for the most part, his sayings were enjoyable as well as profitable.

For forty-three years, in unbroken succession, Father Taylor was appointed to the Mariner's Church, which organization, in 1833, moved into the spacious Bethel, erected by the merchants of Boston, in Brattle Square, which building, during Father Taylor's occupancy of it, was one of the best-known structures on the continent.

In January, 1868, having already fought for some years against the feebleness of age, fighting it, indeed, almost as if he expected to conquer instead of being conquered, Father Taylor resigned his precious Bethel pulpit, and his dear "old workshop," as he called his prayer room, into younger hands, being now in the seventy-third year of his age. In June of the following year his admirable, devoted wife passed on before him to the land of rest, after which her husband broke up still more rapidly than ever; his memory failing, his strength decaying, and before his death, which occurred two years after that of his wife, he had passed far down toward that second childhood, which, for the most part, is held to mark the completion of the circuit of this life, but whose very name suggests the speedy commencement of another and a better.

During his last few months he was exceedingly nervous and restless, and no bed could hold him. He seemed to be squaring off against death, determined not to be driven out of existence. During these times the old fire would sometimes kindle, and the strength of manhood for a moment thrill his wasted form, and the ruling passion, strong in approaching death, would set him preaching and praying.

About ten days before his death occurred an incident which shows with how great a love he had pursued his work of warning sinners and helping them to come to Christ. One day, as with nervous, restless steps he was pacing his room, like a caged lion, his eye caught the figure of a tottering old man in the glass. He instantly stopped, turned to the stranger, made his very best bow, and then began to preach to him. "My dear sir," said he, "you are old, you are infirm, but Christ will save you. Come now, my dear sir, come now; he



will save you." Exhausted by this effort to bring one more sinner to his Saviour he sank upon the sofa, and lost sight of the old man, who thus strangely furnished to him his last audience as a preacher. Then calling to the nurse and housekeeper, he said, "Sally, come here. That old man did not know enough to be saved; he didn't stir a peg while I was talking to him." Two days afterwards being again able to walk, he again caught sight of the old man, and making a most courteous bow, again renewed his exhortation. "It is a very late hour," he said, "but Jesus will save you. Make the venture;" and then, overcome by his feelings, he again sank upon the sofa, and again called his attendant, saying, "That old man is an infidel; he won't have salvation at any price;" and over the hardness of this imaginary auditor's heart he grieved with real sorrow.

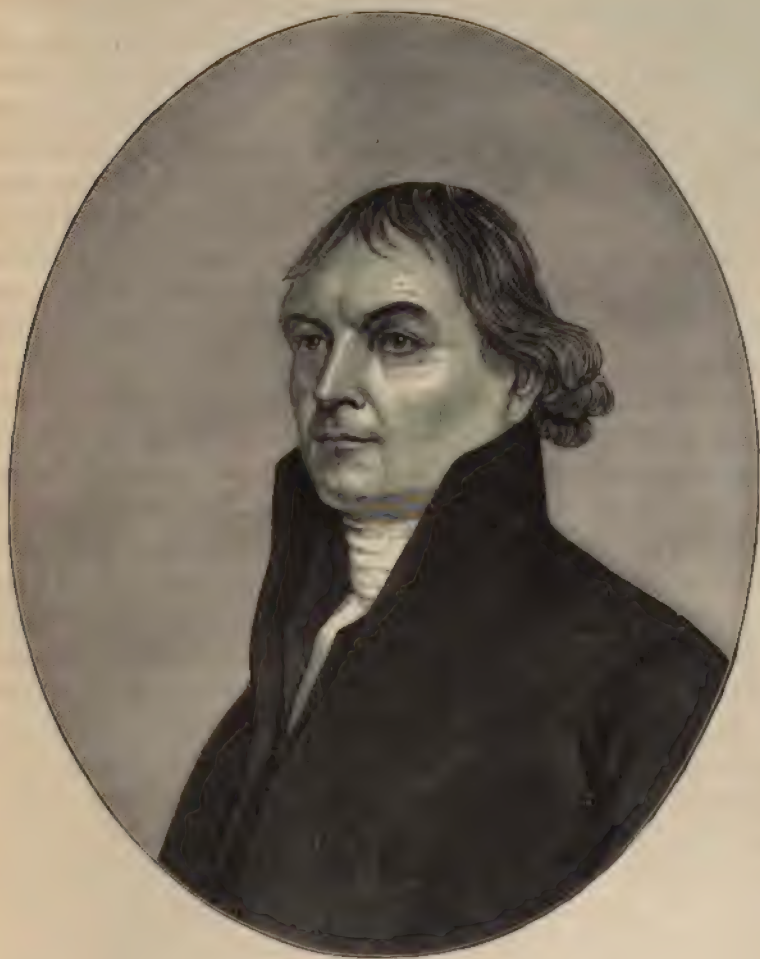
Just at the turn of tide, a little after midnight, on the morning of April 6th, 1871, the spirit of this brave old sailor-preacher slipped its moorings and sailed away on the bright waters of the infinite sea. He died in the faith he had lived to preach, and among his countless lovers on sea and shore his memory still is cherished as that of a soul too free for the restraints endured by common mortals, and a heart too large to be filled by aught besides the love of God, which also means the love of all mankind.\*

\* The authority for this sketch is the "Life of Father Taylor," by Gilbert Haven, D.D., Editor of "Zion's Herald," and Hon. Thomas Russell, Collector of the port of Boston, 1872.



Meridian Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Indianapolis.





BISHOP M'KENDREE.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### WESTERN PIONEERS.

“THE West” is a variable term. During the first quarter of the present century it signified that portion of the great valley of the Mississippi now comprised in the State of Ohio and the eastern ends of Kentucky and Tennessee, though the latter section was more frequently called the Holston country. To record all the steps of the



progress of Methodism in its westward sweep over that vast valley would be an endless task. The little band of itinerants had at length become an army in which there were scores of men any one of whom would have been a hero if he had been alone; and it is to the efforts of these Methodist pioneers, more than to any other human agency, that this great central empire of America owes its Christian civilization. Here at present is the seat of power both in Church and State.

It was in the year 1785 that Richard Swift and Michael Gilbert first crossed the Alleghanies and penetrated the Holston country. In 1786 Haw and Ogden were sent into Kentucky, and in 1789 the first regular Kentucky District was formed, with Francis Poythress as Presiding Elder. Three years afterward Western Methodism reported three districts, comprising portions of Western Virginia, Western Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Tennessee, under the direction of Poythress, Barnabas M'Henry, and Amos Thompson.

Another prominent frontier district at this time was the Red Stone Country, which confronted the immense wilderness known as the North-west Territory, and which was explored by John Cooper and Samuel Breeze as early as 1784; following in the footsteps of Robert Wooster, a local preacher who settled in this country in 1781. It was still little more than a wilderness, with no other roads than bridle-paths, and the chief settlement in the whole district was Fort du Quesne, which, after its capture from the French, had been rechristened Fort Pitt, and which occupied the site of the present city of Pittsburgh. At that time the town was composed of a few huts which nestled under the shelter of the fort, and Pittsburgh was not incorporated until twenty years after.

The first Western Conference was held among the Holston mountains in 1788, and the first Kentucky Conference in 1790. The names of Poythress, Cooper, Breeze, Haw, Ogden, Wilson Lee, Phœbus, Henry Willis, Ware, Burke, M'Henry, Kobler, Hitt, Henry Boehm, McCormick, Valentine Cook, and a host of other men of the same stamp, stand in the records of early Methodism in this country as the founders of a great spiritual empire. They were the giants of those days, and performed their ministry on circuits embracing several counties; the presiding elders' districts covered areas which afterward formed entire States; while evangelists and explorers were sent out



to unknown Western regions to lay out new sections of the ever-extending kingdom of Christ.

The older districts also were still of ample size. The Albany District, for instance, traveled successively by those two great organizers, Freeborn Garrettson and Jesse Lee, comprised the whole north-eastern portion of the State of New York, a considerable part of Vermont, and as much as they pleased of Canada; and the New York Conference, in which this district was situated, was an immense territory, comprising all of New England west of the Connecticut River and the Green Mountains, and all the Methodism in Canada and in the State of New York westward, till it reached the outposts of the Philadelphia Conference somewhere in the mountains of Pennsylvania.

**Ohio**, one of the frontier circuits of this period, was named from "the Great River," as it used to be called, before the majestic proportions of the Father of Waters had made the Ohio seem to be but a moderate-sized stream. In 1803 the Ohio District was organized, and William Burke was appointed to take charge of it. It included all the settlements from the Big Miami to the neighborhood of Steubenville, which was then called the West Wheeling Circuit, and down the Ohio River, including the Little Kanawha and Guyandotte Circuits, in Virginia, and some settlements on the Licking River, in the State of Kentucky. On the north and the west the Ohio District had no boundaries at all. The first year after the organization of this district the Methodist membership thereon was reported at 1,215, while the entire strength of the denomination, on what was called the Western section, was 9,780. In 1810, seven years after, the number in Ohio was 8,781; and in the bounds of the Western section, 22,904; a rate of progress which is equally suggestive of the tide of immigration which flowed into this new country, and of the tireless work of the Methodist itinerants in following up the immigrant wagons and spying out the cabins which nestled among the primeval forests.

The country here was still beset by hostile Indians, and the preachers were sometimes obliged to pass from their Conferences to their frontier circuits in bodies thoroughly armed; it being a very uncomfortable experience, particularly for a nervous man, to ride alone through those woods and swamps, where, in all probability, any large tree might conceal an Indian, who would not be able to distinguish a



Methodist preacher from any common mortal if once he should come within range of his musket. Congregations marched to public worship with their rifles on their shoulders, which they stacked in a corner of the cabin till the meeting was over. The pioneers had a poor chance to be religious; but the preachers of these days report some very pious souls among their frontier congregations, as well as some very brave Indian fighters, for in that day the red men were regarded as a common enemy whose rights few, if any, white men felt bound to respect.

The roll-call of the frontier Conference brought out, among other responses, "Killed by the Indians." How many itinerants fell victims to their zeal and faithfulness it is not possible to determine; but the chance of being pierced by an arrow or a bullet and of being scalped afterward, was one of the ordinary dangers which the itinerants of those times and regions deliberately encountered. If they escaped it was well; if they were killed, they only reached glory the sooner.

As has already been seen, the pioneer Bishop shared these dangers with the men whom he appointed to face them. Again and again, though in feeble health, he climbed the ridge of the Alleghanies and threaded the forest paths that he might see and embrace the brave boys who had volunteered for these dangerous fields. As fast as the advance scouts could lay out new circuits and districts, Asbury followed with Conferences; and thus the outpost of to-day was the intrenchment of to-morrow, with reserve forces continually coming up to form an army of occupation from the regions farther toward the sea.

In 1798 John Kobler, one of the notable itinerants of those times, visited Fort Washington, which was the *nucleus* of the town of Cincinnati, and found that the Presbyterians had already made a location there. He describes the fort as a declining, time-stricken place, containing a few log buildings besides the fortress, one of which was a printing-office, and another a small store. Kobler's reception was not very hearty. He found no opening for a Society; but the Methodists of those days, although it was not an item set down in their creed, firmly believed in the perseverance of the saints. Again and again the circuit riders appeared under the shadow of Fort Washington, and at length came M'Cormick, famous as the founder of Methodism in Ohio.



**Francis M'Cormick** was born and raised in the wilds of the Virginia mountains, where he grew up wild and wicked. Having heard a powerful sermon by William Jessup, one of the itinerants in Frederick County, Virginia, his heart was filled with madness, and he determined to have nothing further to do with Methodists, also forbidding his young wife to attend their services. However, he was unable to stay away from the meetings, and he describes himself as "miserable beyond expression." Not know-



CINCINNATI WESLEYAN COLLEGE.

ing what else to do, he went to hear another Methodist, one Lewis Chasteen, of whom he says, "The preacher took his text, 'And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the tree.' It appeared to me that all the wickedness that I had ever committed stared me in my face. A trembling seized me as though all my flesh would drop from my bones. He preached like a son of thunder, as he truly was, and, after public services, gave an invitation to such as desired to become members to join. Living in the midst of about one hundred relatives, all enemies to the Methodists, how is it possible, thought I, that I can stand to be opposed by such a multitude. It staggered me in a wonderful manner; but it appeared as though I heard a voice from heaven, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.' This had such a powerful effect upon my mind that I was resolved to make a trial, let consequences be what they might." This bold stand for Christ and the truth was soon followed by a sound conversion, and he had the joy of leading his father and some of his other relatives into the kingdom of God.

He now began to exhort, and at last to preach. Being married, he could not hope to enter the itinerancy, but he now devoted himself to evangelical labors; working with his hands for the support of himself and his family in good apostolic fashion. In 1795 he removed to Kentucky, more to preach the Gospel than to better his condition, and set-



tled in Bourbon County, the notorious head-quarters of the Kentucky whisky interest. But here his awakened conscience and enlightened understanding taught him that slavery, which was extending in all directions around him, was wrong, and in order to escape from it he removed with his family from Kentucky into the North-west Territory, as it was then called, and settled in Clermont County, Ohio, from which he afterward removed to a place called M'Cormick Settlement, about ten miles from Fort Washington, the *nucleus* of Cincinnati, which was then the head-quarters for the forces engaged in fighting the Indians, and was under the command of General Harrison. M'Cormick, finding the settlers in those regions thoroughly demoralized, forthwith began to preach the Gospel among them, and formed the first Methodist class and Society in the North-west Territory.

As a specimen of the hardships endured by some of these itinerants the following, from the experience of William Burke, will be of interest. At the outset of his circuit, the neighborhood of the French Broad River, he found himself in the midst of the Cherokee War, which was just then breaking out, and on account of which the settlers were every-where alarmed. However, he kept his first preaching appointment, and on the evening of this day the whole neighborhood collected, having received intelligence that Indians had been seen within the limits of the settlement. This was rather discouraging news; but he had an appointment the following day on the south bank of Little River, and it was a point of honor with the itinerants never to miss an appointment. Two of the brethren offered their services to guard and pilot him through the woods a part of the way, but the appearances were so alarming that they left him to make his way alone, and hastened back for the protection of their families.

Burke arrived at his second preaching place a little before noon, but found it impossible to collect a congregation, as the people from the outlying cabins and clearings were moving in and concentrating for the purpose of fortifying themselves against their red enemies. The work of making a log-cabin into a fort was pressed on with all speed, and after dark the lights were all put out and each man sat down, with his gun on his lap, while a spy was sent out to detect, if possible, the whereabouts of the Indians. Finding the people in no mood to listen to a sermon, Burke, under cover of the night, started



for the next preaching-place, about ten miles distant. There was only a bridle path which led to a river without a bridge, and it was necessary for him to reach an island in the river. The night was dark and the timber was very thick, so that a stranger was very likely to lose himself in the forest, but Burke could not prevail on any of the people to leave the house or to afford him any assistance. "However," says he, "I put my trust in God and I set off."

Having passed over a part of his route he was obliged to alight from his horse and grope his way on foot; but at length he reached the shore of the stream and crossed over to the island, at about two o'clock in the morning. He knocked at the door of the cabin where he was appointed to preach that day, but no one came to admit him. Knowing that there were cabins not far distant he commenced hallooing at the top of his voice, upon which some men came out with rifles in hand and demanded to know who he was and what he wanted; being under the impression that the shouts were given by the Indians for the purpose of decoying them from their hiding-places, and standing in readiness to give the supposed enemy a plentiful supply of powder and lead. Presently a woman, at whose house the itinerant had been accustomed to preach, recognized the voice of the minister, whereupon he was conducted to a place where the whole neighborhood was collected; they being not a little surprised that even the terrible dangers of that region could not keep a Methodist preacher from fulfilling his circuit appointments. The next day Burke pushed on again, followed by the love and prayers of his little flock, and carrying in his own heart the proud sense of having done his duty at the evident danger of his life. But, alas! when he came to the place on the next round of his circuit he found that all the inhabitants of that neighborhood had been massacred by the Indians.

**Asbury in the Indian Country.**—On one occasion the Bishop was obliged to run the gauntlet of the Indians in order to reach his Conference in Kentucky, and a band of sixteen persons gathered about him, some of them being ministers on their way to the Conference, and others laymen, who had volunteered to accompany them. They were all armed except the Bishop. The distance to be traversed was about one hundred and thirty miles through the wilderness, with but a single house on the route. In order to protect themselves from



their red enemies the Bishop suggested that at night their little camp should be surrounded by a rope, tied to the trees at about the height of two feet from the ground; leaving only a small passage for retreat in case of attack. The rope was to be so fixed as to catch the Indians below the knee and throw them on their faces if they advanced in the darkness, which would, of course, give the alarm and enable the episcopal party to fire with better aim. Thus for several nights they tied themselves up in the woods, but fortunately no Indian foot was caught in this snare.

One day, on this march, when they were passing up a stony hollow from Richmond Creek, at the head of which was the war-path from the northern Indians to the southern tribes, they heard, just over the point of the hill, a noise like a child crying in distress. This they doubted not was a strategy of the Indians to decoy them into an ambush, and immediately the party made for a place of safety near by and called a halt, to consult on what was best to be done. Night was coming on, but it was determined to march through the darkness, two men being appointed to lead the line and keep the path, and two to act as rear guard at some distance behind the main body, whose duty it was to bring in intelligence every half hour, that it might be known whether the Indians were in pursuit. The rear guard soon reported that the Indians were following, but it was thought the safest plan to press forward; whereupon the whole party dismounted, and, leading their horses, trudged on till day-break, when they stopped to take some refreshment. By this time the party were very much fatigued, but at least forty or fifty miles of their journey lay before them. All day they pushed on, and at night arrived at the house of a good Methodist, named Willis Green, near Lincoln Court-house, having been on the march nearly forty consecutive hours.

**Some Methodist Geography.**—The General Conference of 1804 defined and published in the Discipline the boundaries of the Annual Conferences, as follows:—

1. The New England Conference includes the District of Maine, and the Boston, New London, and Vermont Districts.
2. The New York Conference comprehends the New York, Pittsfield, Albany, and Upper Canada Districts.
3. The Philadelphia Conference includes the remainder of the State of New



York, all New Jersey, that part of Pennsylvania which lies on the east side of the Susquehanna River, except what belongs to the Susquehanna District, the State of Delaware, the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and all the rest of the peninsula.

4. The Baltimore Conference comprises the remainder of Pennsylvania, the Western Shore of Maryland, the Northern Neck of Virginia, and the Greenbrier District.

5. The Virginia Conference includes all that part of Virginia which lies on the south side of the Rappahannock River and east of the Blue Ridge, and all that part of North Carolina which lies on the north side of Cape Fear River, except Wilmington; also the circuits on the branches of the Yadkin.

6. The South Carolina Conference comprehends the remainder of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

7. The Western Conference includes the States of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio, and that part of Virginia which lies west of "the great river Kanawha, with the Illinois and the Natchez."

**Henry Boehm.**—Henry Boehm, the son of Martin Boehm, a Bishop of the United Brethren, or German Methodists, as they are sometimes called, was among the first and foremost of the western pioneers. He possessed the double advantage of being able to preach both in German and English.

The General Conference of 1800 was followed by a great revival of religion, which extended from Maine to Tennessee, from Georgia to Canada; and the triumphs of grace which he witnessed inspired him for the great mission of his life.

This was a good initiation for Boehm, and when, during the same year, he was called out by Thomas Ware to travel the Dorchester Circuit, in Maryland, he possessed an experience and knowledge of spiritual things which, to a considerable degree, supplied his lack of other education. Asbury soon after chose Boehm for his traveling companion to the West, and they crossed the Alleghanies together, the Bishop preaching in English and Boehm in German; but finding how well the young man was adapted to this special work the Bishop said to him, "Henry, you had better return and preach to the Germans, and I will pursue my journey alone."

In 1808 Boehm again became the companion and associate of Asbury, in which capacity he served for five years, and afterward was appointed successively as Presiding Elder of Schuylkill, Chesapeake,



and Delaware Districts. Before 1810 he had preached the Gospel in German in thirteen or fourteen different States and was requested by Bishop Asbury to superintend the translation of "The Methodist Discipline" into the German language. Few men out of the Episcopacy have ever enjoyed better opportunities for the study of Methodism at large than Henry Boehm. During his companionship to Bishop Asbury he traveled through the length and breadth of the Connection,



PORTRAIT OF HENRY BOEHM.

and his subsequent life, which was prolonged beyond one hundred years, was broadened and sweetened by those grand experiences.

**Bishop M'Kendree.**—[For portrait see heading of this chapter.] The year 1800 was signalized in the West by the appearance of William M'Kendree at the head of the pioneer itinerants; "a man who earned the title of the Father of Western Meth-



odism." For some years M'Kendree, who was a native of King William County, Virginia, where he was born in 1757, had been tending westward along the frontiers of Virginia. He had been a soldier in the war of the Revolution, was converted in 1787, and received on trial as an itinerant in 1788. Being desirous to see for himself the official and personal character of Bishop Asbury, of whom he had heard much evil from O'Kelly, the schismatic, he obtained permission to travel with the Bishop, and in a short time was thoroughly convinced of his apostolic character and mission.

In 1799 M'Kendree was appointed to the charge of a district extending from the waters of the Chesapeake Bay to the summit of the Alleghanies, and in the following year, having passed only once around this great field, he fell in with Bishops Asbury and Whatecoat, and received orders to "pack up forthwith and throw himself into the great western field." At this time the name of this boundless field was the Kentucky Conference, which, in 1801, was changed to that of the Western Conference. It embraced all the country beyond the Alleghanies occupied by the Methodists, extending from Central Ohio to the borders of Georgia, and reaching out into the wilderness toward the Mississippi farther and farther every day. Over all this region William M'Kendree was appointed Presiding Elder. The circuits that composed the Western Conference, and the preachers stationed upon them this year, were as follows: Scioto and Miami, Henry Smith; Limestone, Benjamin Lakin; Hinkston and Lexington, William Burke, Thomas Williamson, and Lewis Hunt; Danville, Hezekiah Harraman; Salt River and Shelby, John Sale and William Marsh; Cumberland, John Page, Benjamin Young; Green Circuit, Samuel Dothel, Ezekiel Burdine; Holston and Russell, James Hunter; New River Circuit, John Watson.

The extent of this district was so great that M'Kendree could only perform his round twice a year. The outlook was at first rather discouraging, but the revival wave, which commenced at the Baltimore Conference of 1800, and swept northward and southward, also overpassed the mountains, and on the Western District in 1801 and 1802 multitudes of sinners were converted. In the revival services which were held—many of them in the woods, because no house would accommodate the vast multitudes assembled—the Methodist and Presby-



terian ministers labored in right brotherly fashion; every local preacher or exhorter who could be found or raised was pressed into the work; and so completely were the denominational lines obliterated by the floods of divine grace and the commingling of labors in drawing the gospel net, that for awhile the Presbyterians appeared to have forgotten that they were Presbyterians, and the Methodists to a considerable degree laid aside their strictness, admitting to their class-meetings all comers, and holding love-feasts with open doors. This union of effort was cordially approved by Bishop Asbury; but certain of M'Kendree's brethren exhorted him to re-establish the restrictions of Discipline, and cut loose from this holy alliance. It appears that the exhortation was heeded, for M'Kendree afterward says, "The union meeting-houses have been no blessing to us, but a great injury. For two years I was stationed in a union church; from ever being stationed in another, good Lord, deliver me."

In spite of all opposition, however, the spirit of unity prevailed to a sufficient extent to impress the Western Presbyterian mind with the excellence of Methodist methods and the soundness of Methodist theology; and to this day Presbyterianism in the North-west is so leavened with free grace, that large numbers of Methodist converts find a comfortable home in its Churches. Here and there a Presbyterian minister or professor in a theological seminary may be found who insists upon the five points of Calvin, and even teaches the old-time heresy of limited atonement; but the visits of such angels are few and far between; and if any one will carefully search among the other religious bodies of the Valley of the Mississippi, he will find that not only Presbyterians, but Congregationalists and Baptists as well, hold their historic faith with a very decided leaning toward a free and full salvation.

The management of such a district as that comprised within the limits of the Western Conference was an admirable training for the Episcopacy.

Up to the time of the first delegated General Conference, which convened at the old John-street Church, New York, in 1812, Asbury had favored the election of Jesse Lee to the Episcopate, from which, as has been seen, he had already had such a narrow escape; but M'Kendree's fame now filled all the West, and the choice lay be-



tween these two admirable men. During the session, before the vote was taken, M'Kendree preached a mighty sermon from the text: "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" The discourse thrilled the assembly like an electric shock, and on its conclusion Asbury said, "That sermon will decide his election." This prophecy was presently fulfilled, and because of his heroic achievements on the frontier, as well as of the evident presence of the Lord in his soul, he was elevated to the office of Bishop—no small honor in the presence of such men as Garrettson, Bangs, Hedding, Soule, Ware, and Lee.

It is related of Bishop M'Kendree, that when he was sent to his first circuit in Virginia so unpromising was his appearance, and so unfavorable the first impression made, that at sight of him the brother, who was to be his host, broke out with: "I wonder whom they will send next;" which remark being overheard by the timid young man from the backwoods served materially to increase his embarrassment. After his first sermon this brother left the church, supposing the young preacher would follow him, but not seeing him for some time he returned, and there found the poor boy seated on the lowest step of the pulpit stairs, his face buried in his hands, a perfect picture of forlornity and despair. On being invited to go home to dinner, poor M'Kendree replied, in a mournful tone, "I am not fit to go home with any body."

"Well," said his friend, "you must have something to eat anyway." Whereupon the young preacher dragged himself once more into the presence of the family.

After dinner his host plainly told him that he thought he had mistaken his calling, to which M'Kendree readily assented, and it was arranged between them that the preaching appointments which had been made for him should be recalled, and that he should go back to his work in the woods. However, there were some appointments at such a distance that it was necessary for the preacher himself to go to the places in order to recall them. A sermon in those days was not a privilege to be missed, and the good people of his circuit insisted that as he was on the ground he should preach as well as he could, and at least fill one round of appointments instead of recalling them; to



which he reluctantly consented, and so great was the blessing of the Lord upon his humble efforts, that, having reached the end of his circuit, instead of going back to his home he attempted another round; and thus a great pioneer light was narrowly saved from being extinguished.

**Episcopal Luxury.**—A glimpse at the primitive fashion in which the pioneer Bishops traveled is afforded in the following brief extract from Asbury's Journal, referring to a time when he and M'Kendree were making their episcopal tour of the South and West together. It must have been while they were in the older and more thickly settled portions of that region, or even this poor equipage would have been out of place. "My flesh," says Asbury, "sinks under labor. We are riding in a poor thirty dollar chaise in partnership—two Bishops of us—but it must be confessed it tallies well with the weight of our purses. What Bishops! Well, we have great news and we have great times, and each western and southern Conference, together with the Virginia Conference, will have one thousand souls truly converted to God. Isn't this an equivalent for a light purse, and are we not well paid for starving and toil? Yes, glory to God!"

M'Kendree was a man of great energy, fertile in resources, modest almost to timidity, and thoroughly consecrated to his work. His sermons were clear, plain, and searching. His acquirements were varied and extensive, his eloquence was of a high order, he was careful in the administration of discipline, and thereby he greatly improved the order and efficiency of all operations of the Church. After the death of Asbury, in 1816, M'Kendree was senior Bishop for nineteen years. He died March 5, 1835, at the residence of his brother near Nashville, Tennessee. One of his last expressions was, "All is well."

**James B. Finley.**—Another distinguished pioneer of Methodism in the West was James B. Finley, a native of North Carolina, who commenced his itinerant ministry as a member of the Western Conference in 1809, being at that time twenty-eight years of age. The scene of his labors was in the State of Ohio. In 1853—three years before his death—the Methodist Book Concern at Cincinnati published his biography; a book abounding in wild adventure, hair-breadth escapes, backwoods wanderings, camp-life, and such other wild experiences as made up a large proportion of the biography of



the western itinerants in that day. Here is a point of peculiar interest:—

**The Methodist Episcopal Church—the First Temperance Society.**—"The only Temperance Society," says Finley, "that then existed, (1812,) was the Methodist Episcopal Church. The General Rules of the Society prohibited the use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and only allowed their use when prescribed as a medicine by a physician. No other denomination having prohibited the use of ardent spirits as a beverage, it followed, as a necessary conse-



JAMES B. FINLEY.

quence, that all persons who refused to drink were called, by way of reproach, 'Methodist fanatics.' I often met with opposition for my advocacy of the cause of temperance."

On one of his circuits Finley relates that at one of his stopping-places his host, who was a member of his Church, took him into a room where there was a ten-gallon keg of whisky which the brother had laid in on account of a barn-raising.

"Do you know that God has pronounced a curse against the man



who putteth the bottle to his neighbor's lips?" said the preacher to his parishioner.

"There is no law against using whisky, and I will do as I please," replied the brother, angrily.

"Very well," was the reply, "it is a poor rule that wont work both ways. If you do as you please, I will do as I please. Take that keg of whisky out of the room or I will leave the house immediately, for I would rather lie in the woods than sleep in a Methodist house with a ten-gallon keg of whisky for my room-mate."

As might have been expected, the host resented this plain dealing, and Finley, as good as his word, mounted his horse and rode off in search of other lodgings. At his appointment next day he preached a rousing temperance sermon, at the close of which an old exhorter came up to him and said, in a fierce and angry tone; "Young man, I advise you to leave the circuit and go home; you are doing more harm than good. If you can't preach the Gospel and let people's private business alone they don't want you at all." Finley replied that he had a special mission to break up this stronghold of the devil, and with the help of God he was determined to do it in spite of all the distillers and whisky-drinkers in the Church.

This beginning he followed up vigorously with sermons, exhortations, and private persuasions. "Frequently," he says, "I would pledge a whole congregation, standing upon their feet, to the temperance cause, and during my rounds I am certain the better portion of the entire community became the friends and advocates of temperance. In this circuit alone at least one thousand had solemnly taken the pledge of total abstinence. This was before temperance societies were heard of in this country. It was simply the carrying out of the Methodist Discipline on the subject."

Through this region revivals of religion swept "like fire in a prairie," not only through the white settlements but also among the Indian tribes. Through the instrumentality of a colored man named John Stuart a revival commenced among the Wyandot Indians at Upper Sandusky, Ohio, and Finley for a time labored among them as a missionary. The style of men who wrought in this field with Finley may be indicated by a fact related to the author by "Father Stewart," a late member of the Ohio Conference; that during his



fifty years of service in Ohio he had personally received five thousand members into the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Finley was eight times elected a delegate to the General Conference. He also served three years and a half as chaplain of the Ohio Penitentiary, and to his labors as a pastor and presiding elder he added the preparation of his "Autobiography," "An Account of the Wyandot Mission," a volume of "Sketches of Western Methodism," "Life Among the Indians," and "Memorials of Prison Life." He was a man of great energy of character, of burning zeal, of fervent piety; a powerful preacher, a popular manager of camp-meetings and other great assemblies, at which, by the power of his eloquence as well as his tact and knowledge of human nature he swayed the masses like trees swept by the winds, calmed the rage of mobs of ruffians, and moved along the path of his duty through that great and growing region of country as a prince and master in Israel. His death occurred on the 6th of September, 1856, in the 75th year of his age.

**The North-west.**—From Ohio the itinerants presently pushed on westward over the Indiana Territory, which included the whole of what is now the States of Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan. In 1805 Michigan Territory was carved out of it, and the territory of Illinois in 1809. The western frontier had now become so extensive that the army of itinerants was not sufficiently numerous to be distributed very thickly, and the progress of the Church was for a time comparatively slow. The first Methodist Society in what is now Indiana was formed in 1802, at a place called Gassoway, near Charleston, in Clarke County, by Nathan Robertson, the first Methodist preacher in the Territory. In 1810 there were within the limits of Indiana only three circuits, four preachers, and seven hundred and sixty members; but this was the beginning of a mighty host; and at present Indiana, with its four large Conferences, its admirable churches, and its thriving literary institutions, may almost be claimed as a Methodist State.

The pioneer of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Illinois was Captain Joseph Ogle, who entered the State in 1785 and settled in St. Clair County. In 1798 came John Clark, a South Carolinian, who was the first man to preach the Gospel west of the Mississippi River.

In the year 1804 Benjamin Young was appointed to Illinois—one



man for a territory containing not far from half a million square miles: but in those days territory was more plenty than preachers, and each itinerant, especially in the Valley of the Mississippi, might have as large a parish as he pleased.

Young formed a circuit in Randolph County, organized five classes, was blessed with about fifty conversions, and, as the result of his labors during the first Conference year, (1804,) he returned a list of sixty-seven members of the Church which he had gathered from the sparse population of his vast and promising circuit.

In 1803 a local preacher by the name of Freeman found his way into that lake-encompassed country now the State of Michigan, and preached at Detroit. The following year Nathan Bangs passed over from Canada, which at that period formed a part of the New York Conference. He found the place wofully depraved, with a conglomerate population of French, Indians, and immigrants, who were in no mood to be reprov'd for their sins or converted from them; but soon after his departure an Irish local preacher, William Mitchell by name, organized the first Methodist Episcopal Society in Detroit, which was also the first Church of any denomination in the State of Michigan.

During the first eight years of the frontier work in the North-west Territory Bishop Asbury made five expeditions thither. He would not send a preacher where he was not willing to go himself.

Dr. Alfred Brunson, whose autobiography covers a period of over seventy years, and under whose eye and hand the early Methodism of the North-west took form and gathered power, was appointed to Detroit in 1822. In order to reach his circuit it was necessary to cross Lake Erie in a sailing vessel, this being before the era of steamboat navigation: and off Cleveland, nearly out of sight of land, when the crew and all the passengers were in high glee, drinking whisky, singing songs, and telling yarns, Brunson happened to go on deck, and looking up saw a squall coming down upon them, and instantly gave the alarm. Already the roar of the coming tempest was heard, and the captain gave the hasty order, "Let run every rag of sail!" Brunson, who was near the main-mast, understood the order, slacked the sheets, and down came the mainsail with a run; and having shortened sail in this lively fashion Brunson seized the helm and brought the vessel up into the wind. Meanwhile the crew had hauled down the



gaff-topsail and jib, and a few seconds afterward the storm burst upon them. If the sails had been standing, as they doubtless would have been but for Brunson's providential appearance on deck, the vessel must have been capsized and all on board would have perished. The craft rolled and tossed at a fearful rate, but the quick eye and prompt hand of the itinerant had saved her; and when the danger was over the passengers, who had listened to a sermon from him, began to discuss the question whether he were the better sailor or preacher.

It was said, during the War of the Rebellion, that a Yankee regiment could furnish men to perform any task, from the building of a locomotive to the editing of a newspaper, or the translation of a passage from the Vedas; but for readiness in all emergencies, and universal knowledge of practical affairs, a conference of those pioneer Methodist preachers would doubtless bear off the palm.

Among the notable men who traveled both in the South-west and North-west was Jesse Walker, who appeared on the Illinois Circuit in 1806. This sturdy itinerant was a native of North Carolina, from whence he early emigrated to Tennessee. He joined the Western Conference in 1802, and traveled circuits in Tennessee and Kentucky for about four years, during which time few men equalled him in the labor performed or the hardships endured. He was a character perfectly unique. He was the Daniel Boone of the Church; always ahead of every body else. His natural vigor was almost superhuman. He did not seem to require food or rest, like other men; no day's journey was long enough to tire him, no fare was poor enough to starve him, no route was too blind or too rough for him. Roads and paths he regarded rather as useless luxuries. If his horse could not carry him he led his horse, and where the horse could not follow he would leave him and press forward on foot; and if night and a cabin did not come together he would camp in the forest or prairie, where he felt himself perfectly at home.

It is said of Daniel Boone that he had the instinct of the bee, and that he could strike out for his cabin in a straight line from any point in the wilderness to which his wanderings might lead him. A similar instinct was possessed by Walker. He found his way through forest and brake as if by instinct. He was never lost, and being possessed of this special aptitude, it is easy to understand how the search for



frontier settlers was one of his chief delights. As the Church moved West and North it seemed to push Walker before it. Every time he was heard from he was still farther out, and when the settlements of the white man halted or moved too slowly, he pushed over among the Indian tribes.

At the time of his appointment to Illinois, in 1806, the region between Kentucky and this new field was an unexplored wilderness, and M'Kendree, then Presiding Elder of the Cumberland District, to which the Illinois Circuit belonged, set out with Walker to assist him on his way. They journeyed on horseback, sleeping in the woods on their saddle blankets and cooking their meals under the trees. It was a time of much rain. The river channels were full to overflowing, and no less than seven times their horses swam the rapid streams with their riders and baggage; the travelers carrying their saddle-bags on their shoulders that they might not spoil their Bibles, hymn books, and clothes. In due time they reached their destination—Central Illinois—and visited the principal neighborhoods in the valley of the Illinois River. M'Kendree remained a few weeks, assisting in forming a new circuit, being received by the settlers with much favor; and then, it is thought, started for Missouri to explore a mission there. Walker was now alone in the Territory, over which he traveled, preaching from house to house, or rather, from cabin to cabin; passing none without calling and delivering the Gospel message; and the Lord blessed him with a general revival of religion all over his circuit.

**Fort Dearborn.**—In 1804 Fort Dearborn was built by the United States Government on the Chicago River, close to Lake Michigan, and here the town of Chicago was laid out in 1830. This fort, of course, was visited by the indefatigable Walker, and soon became a center of operations for the itinerants of this region. "Elder John Sinclair relates that in his visits to hold Quarterly Meetings with the settlers in the vicinity of Chicago (the word 'vicinity' signifying a radius of about a hundred miles, except on the lake side) he always found, whenever he came upon a new family, that Walker had visited them and preached to them. Such frequent discoveries led him to become ambitious to anticipate Walker, if possible; and hearing that a family had recently located at Root River—now Racine—he resolved to be the first to visit them. On his way he stopped at Chicago, and on



going to the fort whom should he meet but Father Walker. On inquiring after his health, Walker replied that he was quite well, but somewhat tired, as he had *just returned from Root River*, where he had been to preach to a family that had recently settled there. Upon this, Sinclair says he felt rebuked, and resolved to make no more effort to deprive the old pioneer of the honors he so greatly coveted.\*

**Marsden's Tribute to American Methodism.**—In 1802 Joshua Marsden, a distinguished English Methodist preacher, visited the United States, and from the record of his impressions of American Methodism the following extracts are of interest: "I was greatly surprised," says he, "to meet in the preachers assembled at New York such examples of simplicity, labor, and self-denial. Some of them had come five or six hundred miles to attend the Conference. They had little appearance of clerical costume; many of them had not a single article of black cloth. Their good Bishops set them the example, neither of whom were dressed in black. But the want of this was abundantly compensated by their truly primitive zeal in the cause of their divine Master. Their costume was that of former times—the color drab, the waistcoat with large laps, and both coat and waistcoat without any collar. Their appearance was simplicity itself, and had something truly apostolic. I felt impressed with awe in their presence, and soon perceived that they had established themselves in the esteem and veneration of their brethren, not by the trappings of office or the pomp and splendor of episcopal parade, but by their vast labors, self-denying simplicity, and disinterested love. Most of the preachers appeared to be young men, yet ministerial labor had impressed its seal upon their countenances.

"I cannot contemplate without astonishment the great work God has performed in the United States. In England Methodism is like the river, calmly gliding on; here it is a torrent, rushing along and sweeping all away in its course. Methodism in England is the Methodism of Wesley—methodical, intelligent, and neat; in America it resembles Asbury—it has some roughness and less polish.

"The good they have done to the blacks is beyond calculation, and the new settlements in different parts of the interior without such a ministry might have degenerated into heathenism."

\* Letter of Hon. Grant Goodrich, of Chicago, to the author.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### BISHOP ASBURY AND HIS EARLY SUCCESSORS—METHODISM IN THE SOUTHWEST.



UNION M. E. CHURCH, ST. LOUIS.

**A**MONG the many admirable qualities which distinguished the Pioneer Bishop were his simplicity and his kindness to the poor. In one of his entries in his Journal he says: "O, what happiness do they lose who never visit the poor in their cottages!" On another occasion, having arrived at one of the great houses at which he was accustomed to be entertained on his endless journeyings, he speaks of holding a meeting in the kitchen with the black servants, while at the same time a young minister, one of the preachers on that circuit, was holding a sacramental love-feast with the

master and the mistress and distinguished visitors in the parlor.

In 1793 he writes: "Thursday, September 22. I have been sick upward of four months, during which time I have attended to my business and ridden, I suppose, not less than three thousand miles." If a sick man of his stamp were able to work at that rate, what might he not have done if he had been well? This very thought sometimes stirred his own soul to enthusiasm, and on one occasion he broke out with these words: "I groan with pain one minute and shout glory the next. If I only had health, America should not hold me." And thus for decade after decade he struggled with the infirmities of his body, upborne by the grace and power which dwelt in his soul.

**Episcopal Gravity and Humor.**—Under his elegant and saintly exterior (which is shown more perfectly in the English portrait, by Whitehouse, than in the more familiar one at New York, taken later in life) there was a good deal of native wit, which he



often found it difficult to restrain. Scattered through his Journals are moans and lamentations over the lightness and levity into which he has been betrayed; but his wit was not of a boisterous sort; it was rather like flecks of sunshine falling through the leaves of a forest; brightening and cheering, but not stirring coarse laughter. Here is one of his quaint fashions of reproving sin, which is equally creditable to his ingenuity and his piety: "Monday, August 15, 1796. We rode to New York. While crossing the ferry some foolish, wicked people uttered so many *damns* that I was a little afraid the Lord would sink the boat. I asked a man if he had any chalk to lend me, so that I might mark down the curses the company gave us on our passage of thirty or forty minutes." The sight of this quiet stranger keeping tally of the oaths uttered in his hearing must have produced a healthful impression upon that boatload of rough people.

The Rev. John W. Bond, who was for a time the Bishop's traveling companion, says: "There was never a person on earth I was so afraid of as of Bishop Asbury. There was an air of sternness about him that forbade any one approaching too near. You must wait his time; but when he was in the humor you could approach him with perfect ease, and there would be with him the utmost simplicity and familiarity. He could be one of the most communicative of men, and for hours entertain you with pleasing and amusing anecdotes. The Bishop would appear often to be lost in thought as he was riding along: he was either studying his sermons or planning the work in his vast field of labor: at such times there was nothing to be said to him. All at once his countenance and manner would change, and he would beckon or call his friend to come up and ride beside him, and enter into the most free and familiar conversation." Father Boehm gives a similar account.

He had an eye to pity and a hand to relieve distress. Boehm relates that once when they were passing through Ohio he came upon a little assembly of people, and on inquiring the cause he was informed that the cow of a poor widow was about to be sold for debt; whereupon he inquired carefully into the circumstances, and declared that the cow must not be sold. He started a subscription, headed it himself, and solicited from the company who had gathered for the sale money enough to pay the debt, and the cow was given back to the widow.



**Asbury a Judge of Men.**—The Bishop was gifted with rare discernment of character. Preachers who for the first time were ushered into his presence said they felt as if he were looking through and through them; and in these inspections he very rarely made a mistake. There was one Kline, a member of the New York Conference, a good man but by no means a great man, who one day called upon the Bishop at his lodgings in the city of New York; and the Bishop, stepping out of the room for a few minutes, left him there alone. Seeing a book lying upon the table near him he took it up, and on opening it discovered it to be a manuscript volume in which the Bishop recorded his opinions of the ministers under his command. The first thing his eye rested upon was—"John Kline, a man of small preaching talents, but thought to be very pious and useful."

When the infirmities of age began to press upon him some of his brethren wished him to retire, as God had raised up many strong men who were able to relieve him of his abundant labors. But this Asbury would not do. "No man can do my work," said he, and he persisted in traveling through the length and breadth of the Connection. He had been an excellent preacher as well as administrator in his time, but now, perceiving that he was not able to preach as formerly he delegated the most of this work to younger men, but in order that he still might spread the Gospel he packed a quantity of Bibles in his carriage and distributed them on his way, saying, "Now I know I am sowing good seed."

Mention has already been made of the almost military rigor with which Asbury commanded his itinerant army. Having studied his men and explored their fields of labor, and having also prayed over every appointment, he announced the same as a finality. The reading of the appointments was the last thing done at the Conference; and in order to prevent the possibility of any complaints, he was accustomed to have his horse, ready saddled, waiting at the door of the church, and the moment he had finished reading the appointments and pronounced the benediction he mounted, and rode away, without even informing any one where he was going. Thus, by necessity, the appointments must stand, since there was no one to change them, and no court of appeals known to Methodist Discipline.

In the year 1807 the Bishop seems to have received a special dis-



pensation of health. In October of that year he writes, "I am young again," [he was now sixty-two years old,] "and boast of being able to ride six thousand miles on horse-back in ten months. My round will embrace the United States, the Territory, and Canada." This entry was made at Cincinnati, Ohio, in which state Methodism had been already widely extended. In the summer of 1811 he made his first visit to Upper Canada, where he met some of the descendants of the old Irish Palatine stock.

**Asbury on Matrimony.**—During this year several entries in his Journal refer to the subject of marriage, in one of which he says: "I have read Adam Clarke, and am amused, as well as instructed. He indirectly unchristianizes old bachelors. Woe is me!" Having sworn himself to a life of celibacy as one of the privations and necessities of his episcopal career he was somewhat annoyed at the frequent stragglers from the ranks, who located on account of their marriage. In the early days there were few married men among the itinerants, and the taking of a wife was expected to be followed by a location; on which matter the Bishop moralizes thus:—

"If a rich serious young lady wished to marry a rich child of the devil, she would lose her light, and though she might not be willing to allow that it was extinguished, her pious friends would soon see in her naught but darkness. Why not marry a handsome young Methodist preacher? She would then have something for her money. She would have goodness, for after all, who are good if not those who practice goodness and teach others so to do? But Mr. Wesley meant not this, for he knew, and so do I know, that it would scarcely be good for more than one of the parties. Few preachers, if any, have been as holy and useful in after as in former life who have married rich women, and some have ended in apostasy."

The Journal of Bishop Asbury, which is the chief foundation of Methodist history in America, as are the Journals of John Wesley in England, closes on the 7th of December, 1815. Worn out with labor and travel, he lays down his pen, and presently he is to lay down his life; not to lose it, but, after the manner of his Lord, to take it again. He has made a tour southward from Virginia as far as Columbia, South Carolina, from which point he hoped to reach Baltimore on the ensuing May, that he might be present at one more General Confer-



ence. In this expectation he was, however, disappointed. The disease with which he was afflicted terminated in consumption, which made such rapid progress as to prostrate the small remaining strength of a constitution already worn out by fatigue and labor, and trembling under the repeated strokes of disease. His mind, however, rose superior to his bodily weakness; and, impelled by an insatiable desire for usefulness, he made a hospital of his carriage, and as his strength would permit he journeyed from place to place; sitting in his chair to speak if he were too weak to stand, and thus by painful stages he reached Richmond, Virginia, on the 24th of March, 1816.

**Asbury's Last Sermon** was preached in the old Methodist Episcopal Church in Richmond, at the date just mentioned. Perceiving his great weakness of body, some of his friends endeavored to dissuade him from such an effort, fearing it might immediately cost him his life. But he still persisted that he had one more message to deliver in the name of his Master, and his friends tenderly and lovingly carried him into the church—he was unable either to walk or stand—lifted him into the pulpit, and seated him on a table prepared for the purpose. His text was Romans ix, 28: "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." He frequently paused during his sermon to recover breath and strength, and these very pauses made the sermon, which was of an hour's length, more weighty and impressive.

He is an old man now, seventy-two years of age. He has fought disease as heroically as he has fought the devil, but in this contest he is almost vanquished now. His eyes have grown so dim that he is not able to write or read the records of appointments, and he has resigned the stations to his new colleague, Bishop M'Kendree. But he is the Bishop still—what is left of him—and with the little life that is in him he is bent on issuing one more order for an advance in God's name, all along the line. He must give his companions his farewell message; he must rehearse to them from what small beginnings God had raised them up to their present greatness; he must exhort them once more to be holy:—in the last years of his life he had something to say about holiness in every discourse. He must warn them not to conform to the fashion of this world:—his heart has been troubled of late



by seeing even the daughters of Methodist preachers wearing ornaments of gold—and he must prophecy to them of the swiftness and the glory of the final ushering in of Christ's kingdom. His old friends listen tearfully and lovingly while he gives his last charge to his last congregation, and then they take him upon their arms and lovingly carry him away.

With the hand of death upon him he arises from his bed on the Tuesday following, and sets his face toward Baltimore. He also makes brief journeys on Thursday and Friday, and finally reaches the house of his old friend, George Arnold, in Spottsylvania. Here his distress is so evident that his friends urge him to send for a physician, but he gives them to understand that it would be useless, saying: "Before the doctor could reach me I should be gone, and all he could do would be to pronounce me dead." On the morning of the Sabbath, March 31, he desires the family to be assembled, and Brother Bond, his traveling companion, sings, prays, and expounds the 21st chapter of the Revelation, as well as he is able under the pressure of the great sorrow that is impending. The Bishop, observing the distress of his companion, raises his dying hand with a joyful expression of countenance, which being observed, he is asked if he feels the Lord Jesus to be precious. He is now too far gone to speak, but exerting all his remaining strength, he raises both his hands as if in benediction, or perhaps in wonder at the heavenly glory which is already opening to his dying vision, and a few minutes after he peacefully breathes his last in the arms of his faithful companion.

His funeral was celebrated in the city of Baltimore during the session of the General Conference which he had so persistently but vainly attempted to reach. His remains, which had been temporarily deposited in the burying-ground of his friend Arnold, were, by order of the Conference, and at the request of the Baltimore Society, taken up and brought to that city, and from the parsonage of the old Light-street Church, which for years had been the nearest approach to a home that this itinerant Bishop had ever possessed, he was borne on the shoulders of some of his loving sons in the ministry to the Eutaw-street Church, preceded by Bishop M'Kendree and the Rev. William Black, representative from the Conference of British America, and followed by the members of the General Conference as chief mourn-





THE CHURCH LOT IN MT. OLIVET CEMETERY.



ers, and a vast concourse of citizens. The funeral oration was pronounced by Bishop M'Kendree.

All that was mortal of this man, who was now immortal, was placed in a vault prepared for it under the pulpit of the Eutaw-street Church, in Baltimore, from which it was afterward removed to the Bishops' lot in Mount Olivet Cemetery; a burial place belonging to the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore, the present representative of the old Lovely Lane and Light-street Churches.

On this sacred spot stands the Bishops' monument, bearing memorials of Francis Asbury, Enoch George, John Emory, and Beverly Waugh; and here, also, the New England Methodists have recently erected an elegant shaft of Scotch granite to the memory of the chief apostle of Methodism in New England—Jesse Lee—whose death occurred at Hillsborough, on the eastern coast of Maryland, September 12th, 1816.

The record of the ministry of this apostolic man covers about fifty-five years, forty-five of which were spent in America; thirty of them in the office of Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Through all those years he preached on an average seven or eight times a week. He presided in no less than two hundred and twenty-four Conferences, and ordained to the ministry about four thousand men.

**Bishop George.**—Enoch George, the fifth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was trained on one of the great frontier circuits at the head of the Catawba and Broad Rivers, in North Carolina. He was born in Lancaster County, Virginia, in 1767 or 1768. Though brought up in the English Church he was addicted to the dissipation which prevailed in his neighborhood. He was at length brought under the care of that pious and active Church minister, Jarratt, under whom he received his first religious impressions, and was afterward converted under the ministry of John Easter, a preacher on the old Brunswick Circuit. The revival in the neighborhood of a village called Hicksford, in which George was converted, was marked by some of those extraordinary physical exercises which have so astonished the opponents of supernatural religion. Easter was one of the mighty men; when he preached the multitude trembled with astonishment, and large numbers sometimes cried aloud and fell to the ground.



It was on such an occasion that Enoch George was brought under conviction. In his account of it he says, "Some fell near me, and one almost on me, and when I attempted to fly I found myself unable. When my consternation subsided I collected all my strength and resolution and left my friends and the family, determining never to be seen at



BISHOP GEORGE.

a Methodist meeting again. In this I was defeated. On the next day there was to be another meeting in our vicinity, and my father commanded my attendance. I went, intending to steel my heart against conviction. However, it pleased God on this day to open my eyes



and turn me from darkness to light by the ministry of the word, and I was willing to become a Christian in the way of the Lord."

It was not long before George was happy in the possession of a new heart, and shortly afterward he joined a Methodist Society. His brethren, discovering in him a talent for exhortation, insisted on his performing this service, and after repeated refusals he reluctantly consented. With such favor was his word received that he was presently "called out" by Philip Cox and sent to a circuit in North Carolina, three hundred miles distant. This was in 1789. In 1790 he was admitted to the North Carolina Conference on trial, and thenceforth made such good proof of his ministry that in 1796 he reached the dignity of a Presiding Elder, and in 1816, after the death of Bishop Asbury, he was elected and ordained Bishop. His death occurred at Staunton, Virginia, August 23d, 1828.

**Bishop Roberts.**—Robert R. Roberts, the sixth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was one of the most perfect specimens of frontier ministers ever produced in America. He was born in Frederick County, Maryland, in 1778. His father was a backwoods farmer, who, when the boy was seven years of age, emigrated over the mountains to the Ligonía Valley, in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, where the family lived for years in the woods, far from schools and churches, and with no other means of grace at hand than the family Bible; but when young Roberts was about ten years old some of the ubiquitous itinerants found out the cabin, preached the Gospel to its inmates, and not long afterward had the satisfaction of receiving the entire family into the fellowship of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the year 1800, Roberts, who was now a stalwart young fellow, well up in felling trees, building fences, tracking game, and all the other arts of forestry and farming, received a license as an exhorter. He made an imposing figure standing on a stump or in a wagon, his fine form arrayed in the approved backwoods costume of hunting shirt, buckskin breeches, and moccasins; and as, in addition to the Bible, he had been a faithful student of "Wesley's Sermons" and "Fletcher's Checks to Antinomianism," he was rather more than usually well qualified in point of learning to enter upon the sacred office.

When he first presented himself at the Baltimore Conference, in



1802, he made quite a sensation by his youthful freshness and vigor. The life of the forest had made its indelible impression upon him, and Asbury, who was quick to discern the powers as well as the characters of men, at once laid claim to him for service in the wilds of the West. He was a child of the wilderness; he had a body and a consti-



BISHOP ROBERTS.

tution made for danger and toil; he was a splendid shot with his rifle; he had built himself a log-cabin and dwelt for years out of sight of civilized man, tilling the earth in summer and hunting the bear, the deer, and the raccoon in the winter; and thus the refinements of sea-



board cities, which were so attractive to many exiles sent to the Western Conference, could have no attraction for him. His first appointments were in Western Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Ohio, where he displayed such rare abilities that the older portions of the Church appear to have envied the West their possession of him, and after a dozen years or so in the wilderness Bishop Asbury appointed him to the very head-quarters of Methodism, in Baltimore; to which place he reluctantly went, doubting his adaptation to polite society and city congregations. In the spring of 1816, Asbury being now dead, Roberts was elected to preside over the Philadelphia Conference, though he was the youngest preacher present; and with such native dignity and manifest common sense did he fill this difficult place, that he at once became a prominent candidate for the Episcopacy, to which office he was elected at the ensuing General Conference that same year.

Being a Bishop, Roberts was now free. He had no ecclesiastical superior to drag him from his beloved woods and mountains, and coop him up in the streets of Baltimore and Philadelphia; and no sooner had he passed to the highest honor of the Church than he fixed his residence in the old cabin in the Chenango County woods, where he dwelt in peace during such intervals as his labors afforded him; brushing the dust of civilization out of his eyes, and its cobweb follies out of his brain: subsisting in primitive fashion and holding communion with nature and with God. From this cabin he afterward removed to an episcopal palace in Indiana, which was then counted the "Far West." This residence, like the former, was built of logs, and both the edifice and its furniture were constructed by his own hands. His annual income during the most of his career was from four hundred to four hundred and fifty dollars, which was enough for his simple wants, and comported well with the style of living in the western half of his great field, which now comprised all that was known of the vast valley of the Mississippi.

In early years he suffered from extreme diffidence, which afterward became a subdued modesty, and which, with the plainness and simplicity of his manners and apparel, often led to ludicrous mistakes. On ordinary occasions he assumed no other dignity than that of a private Christian; and frequently in his journeyings among the people it was not until the family worship revealed his spirit and power that his



ministerial character was suspected. Many an exhortation did he receive from zealous class-leaders whose little meetings he attended without making himself known, and not unfrequently he found a quiet pleasure in the sudden transition from rudeness to deference which took place in the manners of persons who had at first entertained this angel unawares.

During his superintendency he traversed the entire country from Michigan to Florida, and from Maine to Louisiana, and penetrated into the Indian countries west of Missouri and Arkansas. For the last twenty-four years of his life, that is to say from 1819 to 1843, his nominal residence was the log-cabin in southern Indiana above mentioned, from which point he diverged in all directions, taking no account of toil or fatigue, poverty or hunger, suffering or peril. In the full vigor of his life he was a man of magnificent proportions, weighing not far from two hundred and fifty pounds, with large manly features and open and pleasant countenance. There was about him a quiet suggestion of reserved power, on which, under special stress of circumstances, he was able to draw with tremendous effect. It is said of him, that, in several instances, while presiding over Annual Conferences where great excitement was about to produce general disorder, he has been known suddenly to assume as much authority as would suffice to command an army, and by the overwhelming weight of his personal will to crush out dissension and bring order out of confusion. On the other hand, as a proof of his meekness and humility, in 1836, being in the twentieth year of his Episcopate, when he was the senior Bishop, he tendered his resignation to the General Conference, simply because in his own estimate of himself, his qualifications for the office, small at best, would soon be so diminished by the infirmities of age that he could not be safely intrusted with the exercise of the great powers which it implied; but to his great surprise no one moved to accept his resignation, and thus he was compelled to bear his official honors to the end. His death occurred March 26th, 1843.

The seventh Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church was Joshua Soule. His election to the Episcopacy occurred at the General Conference of 1824, and he seceded in 1844 with the body which formed the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Further notice of him will, therefore, be given in connection with the sketch of that Church.



**Bishop Hedding—The Radical Movement.**—Elijah Hedding, the eighth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and one of the princes in Israel, was an eastern contribution to the Episcopacy. He was born near what is now the town of Pine Plains, in Dutchess County, New York, on the 7th of June, 1780. He was



BISHOP HEDDING.

blessed with a religious home training, and also enjoyed the ministrations of Benjamin Abbott, who, in 1790, traveled the Dutchess Circuit. In 1791 the Hedding family emigrated to Starksborough, a portion of the State of Vermont then recently opened for settlement; and in



this wild region the young man grew up to be a spirited, venturesome youth, a leader among his companions not only in the wild exploits of the woods, but also in such intellectual contests as prevailed in that rural region. On account of his forwardness in learning he was chosen on several occasions to read one of Wesley's sermons to a little congregation of Methodists which had assembled for worship, and his attention being thus called to the chief Methodist classic he read through the whole series of discourses, and retained a good portion of them in his memory.

In the year 1798 he experienced a clear and sound conversion under the labors of Joseph Mitchell, who, with Abner Wood, traveled Vergennes Circuit that year; and from the day of his conversion it appeared that the seal of God was upon him for the work of the holy ministry. He had hardly been admitted into full membership before he was urged to take an exhorter's license, and under these persuasions he began to hold meetings in the neighborhood, sometimes delivering a well-arranged discourse, but modestly refraining from taking a text, or calling it a sermon. He was admitted to the New England Conference in 1801, and sent to the Essex Circuit, about three hundred miles in extent, embracing the whole tract of territory between Lake Champlain and the Green Mountains, and extending some twenty or thirty miles into Canada, having for his senior colleague that warm-hearted Irishman, Henry Ryan, of whom further mention will be made in connection with Canadian Methodism.

The masses of the people in that section of the country were sunk in ignorance, and not at all addicted to religion. The sound of the gospel trumpet in their midst at first aroused their curiosity, and then their anger, and they often assembled in great crowds at the preaching-places for the purpose of making disturbance. The infidel principles of Thomas Paine largely prevailed, and the opposition to Christianity thereby inspired sometimes took the form of personal violence, at others the form of ridicule, and young men, and even women, had been whipped by their fathers for the crime of attending the Methodist meetings. It was a circuit well calculated to put the powers of young Hedding to the test; but so well informed was his mind, so well balanced his character, and so abundantly was he endowed with nerve and muscle, that when he arose to face down a crowd of ruffians,



as he was sometimes obliged to do, no man among them dared to look him in the eye.

In 1803 he was appointed to Bridgewater Circuit, a field embracing the central part of the State of New Hampshire, in which he was prostrated by an attack of inflammatory rheumatism that crippled his limbs, and he was coolly informed by his physician that he would never recover their use. But being determined to keep the field to which the Lord and the Church had appointed him he managed to climb into his saddle again, and being unable to use his hands and arms he held the reins in his teeth, and thus started to make the rounds of his circuit at the imminent peril of his life. Again and again he was thrown from his horse, and picked up and remounted by some passing traveler; on several occasions suffering severe injury; but it appears that he was more than a match even for inflammatory rheumatism, which disease being unable to hold its ground against such treatment as this finally left him in peace, and he proceeded on his mission with more vigor than ever.

It was not long before he reached the dignity of Presiding Elder on the New Hampshire District, where for his first year of service he received the sum of four dollars and twenty-five cents in cash. Then two years more on the New London District, in connection with which he accepted the post of parish minister in the town of Ludlow, Massachusetts, having a salary paid by the town in consideration of a stipulated amount of service which he was able to spare from his duties as Presiding Elder. In 1811 he removed to Boston, where, among many other seals of his ministry, the world-renowned sailor-preacher, Edward T. Taylor, was converted under one of his powerful sermons, which Taylor describes as "the broadside that brought me down."

While traveling one of his early circuits, during a particularly unpleasant northern winter the ground was thawed by powerful rains, and a thin crust quickly formed on the surface. Hedding's horse had broken through this crust till his legs had become so sore and lame as to render him useless, and to obtain another horse was impossible, as no one would risk an animal in such traveling. What was to be done? The appointments were out and the people would expect him to fill them. A less resolute man might have regarded this as a providential hedging up of his way, but to Hedding it was simply an obsta-



cle to be overcome; and, taking his saddle-bags on his shoulders, he started out and actually made the round of his circuit on foot, having traveled in two weeks a distance of one hundred and fifty miles. Of this pedestrian tour he long afterward says: "Frequently I would break through the ice and frozen mud in the swamps and woods, tearing my boots and keeping my feet wet most of the time; but I persevered and got around to my appointments at the usual time, preaching once or twice a day, besides my other accustomed services. I lived through it, but from the effects of the exposures and hardships of that tour I have never recovered to this day."

As early as 1820 Hedding's friends proposed to put him in nomination for the Bishopric, but he refused to allow it, because of his humble estimate of his own abilities. Four years later, when the proposition was renewed, he wept, remonstrated, and urged a number of objections against the movement, but at length reluctantly yielded, and thereupon entered a period of episcopal service extending over thirty years, in which he proved himself to be a worthy successor of the apostles. The United States at that time embraced thirty States and Territories, and contained twenty-five million inhabitants, one fifth part of whom were under the watch-care of the Methodist ministry, and over all this field it was his duty to travel. At the time of his election there were neither railroads nor steamboats; but there were roads throughout the most of the country, on which he might be shaken up in stage-coaches, and the geography of the country was so well known that he was able to station his rapidly-increasing army of preachers with some degree of definiteness, and also to sprinkle them more thickly over the land.

Hedding has been called a man of the Daniel Webster stamp, but the compliment is a doubtful one. To call Daniel Webster a man of the Hedding stamp would be very much higher praise. His mind was strong and steady, possessing great power of analysis and logic. Free from passion and evenly poised, he cast aside all trifling and unworthy thoughts and things, and with his eye upon some great conclusion or achievement he advanced with steadily-increasing momentum to ultimate and real success. As a preacher he was mighty; given to the development of deep doctrines, attempting no lofty flights of rhetoric, but laying down the principles of orthodox theology,



and enforcing the claims of practical righteousness in a manner next to irresistible.

The leaders of the temperance reform should not fail to claim Bishop Hedding as one of the pioneers of that movement.

He was also one of the prominent characters in the great slavery debates, of which a larger account will be given in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. He was such a firm believer in peace and order, and so thoroughly devoted to the Church, that the agitation kept up by the more zealous abolitionists, gave him great distress. He was by no means an apologist for negro slavery; but it was his fond hope that the Church at the South would, of its own accord, provide for its extinction; hence he counseled moderation and patience, which, in the stormy quadrennium of 1844-48, were admired on the one hand and blamed on the other. But he was now an old man, and his love for the Church which he had served so devotedly occupied so great a place in his soul, that even his capacious nature had no room for sympathy with any movements, however excellent in themselves, which were of a political rather than of a religious character. The death of Bishop Hedding occurred at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., on the 9th of April, 1852, after a ministry of fifty-one years, and a period of episcopal service of nearly twenty-eight years. His last illness was protracted and severe, but his mental powers were preserved clear and vigorous to the last, and in his dying moments he broke forth with praises to God, and died shouting, "Glory, glory, glory!"

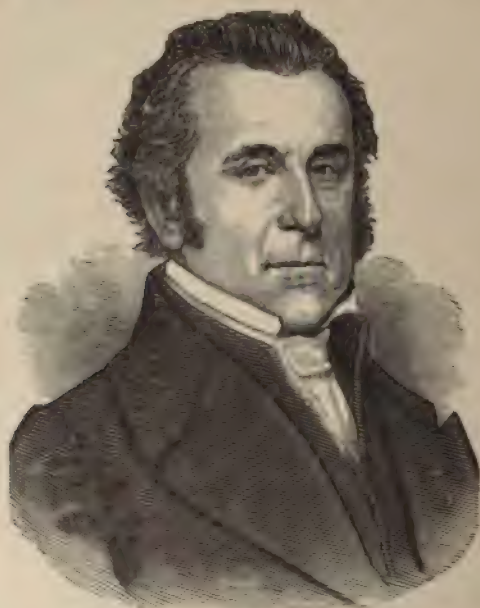
**The Methodist Protestant Church.**—It was Bishop Hedding who, at the General Conference held at Pittsburgh in 1828, took that vigorous action against the radical movement—the O'Kelly movement over again—which led to the formation of the Methodist Protestant Church. It is of little avail to recall the sharp debates of those days over lay delegation and kindred measures proposed by the reformers. A little more patience on one side and a little more wisdom on the other would have saved this second division in the Methodist ranks; and it is among the events to be hoped for, that the two bodies may yet find a common form of agreement in which, having identical doctrines, they may once more become united.

On the 12th of November, 1828, a general convention of the



Reformers assembled at St. John's Church, Baltimore, at which eleven States and the District of Columbia were represented.

**Nicholas Snethen**, one of the veterans of the Conference, who, on account of his admirable style as a preacher was familiarly known as "Asbury's silver trumpet," was elected president of the Convention, and William Stockton was chosen secretary. As the result of its deliberations articles of association were agreed upon, a committee was appointed to draft Discipline and Constitution, and to



NICHOLAS SNETHEN.

compile a Hymn Book, and after a session of ten days the Convention adjourned for two years.

The second Convention of the Reformers, in 1830, was composed of one hundred and fourteen delegates, ministers and laymen being in equal proportion, representing a constituency of about eighty ministers and five thousand members. Their first name, "Associated Methodist Church," was here changed to the "Methodist Protestant Church;" the Episcopacy and presiding eldership were rejected; the Annual Conference was authorized to elect its president annually; the General Conference was provided for, which, like the Annual Conference, was



to consist of an equal number of ministers and laymen, the ratio of representation being fixed at one minister and one layman for a thousand persons in full membership, and this General Conference was appointed to hold its session once in seven years.

Class-leaders, also, instead of being appointed by the pastors, as in the old Church, were to be annually elected by their classes, and the right of suffrage and eligibility to office were limited to white males in full connection and twenty-one years of age. The General Rules of Mr. Wesley, and the Articles of Religion contained in the Discipline



METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH, PITTSBURGH.

of the Methodist Episcopal Church were adopted in full. The itinerant ministry was preserved, a Ritual and Hymn Book was adopted, and a committee was appointed to secure the Charter for a Book Concern. The progress of the body was rapid. At its first General Conference, held in Georgetown, D. C., May 6, 1834, at which the Rev. Nicholas Snethen again presided, fourteen Annual Conferences were represented, comprising about five hundred preachers. The membership of the body had increased to about twenty-seven thousand.



In 1877 a secession from the "Methodist Protestant Church," calling itself "The Methodist Church," was again reunited with the parent body, which now includes over thirteen thousand preachers, about one hundred and twenty thousand members, and Church property to the value of over two and a half millions of dollars.

Much as this secession is to be regretted, Bishop Hedding cannot be blamed for his action in the matter. He had the sagacity to see that peace lay in the direction of separation, and he possessed the courage to take the responsibility of bringing that separation about. Having settled the matter, however, he did not cherish hostility to his departing brethren, who, in spite of having felt the weight of his hand, were ultimately glad to acknowledge the kindness as well as the soundness of his heart.

**Bishop Emory.**—The General Conference of 1832 elected James O. Andrew and John Emory to the Episcopacy. The former having departed with those who formed the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, will be mentioned in connection therewith.

The parents of John Emory were distinguished Maryland Methodists, and gave their son a superior education. He early devoted himself to the legal profession, but in his seventeenth year he was converted from the world to the Church, and was admitted to the Philadelphia Conference in 1812, being then twenty-two years of age. This decision was not reached without great mental struggles, but in 1809 he wrote out and signed a solemn "covenant" to give up law and preach the Gospel, and instantly his mind, which had been clouded and dark, was brightened and cheered. Peace returned, love flowed through his soul.

Down to this day the Church has not possessed a more scholarly man. He was pre-eminent as a Conference debater, especially in the General Conference, and his legal skill solved for it some of its most difficult legislative problems.

In 1820 Emory represented his Church in the British Wesleyan Conference. Four years later he was appointed Book Agent with Nathan Bangs, and in 1832 he was elected Bishop. In this position, however, he was destined only to a brief career. In 1835, on his way from his residence to the city of Baltimore he was thrown from his carriage, and was found lying insensible, from



which state he did not recover, and died before the close of the day.

His writings in defense of his denomination, both of its theology and its polity, are authoritative and conclusive. In 1827 his "Defense of our Fathers" was published, in reply to a book by a Protestant Local



BISHOP EMORY.

Preacher named McCaine. This work of Bishop Emory ranks among the Methodist classics, and is still honored with a place in the course of study for candidates seeking admission to the itinerant ministry.



**Bishop Waugh.**—Beverly Waugh and Thomas A. Morris were the Bishops elected at the General Conference of 1836, the former a member of the Baltimore, and the latter of the Ohio Conference. Bishop Waugh was a native of Virginia. He was born in Fairfax County, in the year 1789, was converted in his fifteenth year, and



BISHOP WAUGH.

joined the Baltimore Conference in 1809, when scarcely twenty years old. He soon displayed high character and solid abilities, which secured for him the best positions in the gift of his Conference. He was repeatedly appointed to Baltimore, Washington, and Georgetown,



and in 1828 the General Conference elected him Book Agent at New York. Eight years after, at the General Conference held at Cincinnati, in 1836, he was elected Bishop, rather on account of his consummate prudence and high personal and ministerial character, than on account of brilliant or popular qualities. For twenty-two years he performed the duties of the episcopal office in a careful, laborious manner.

His Episcopate closed in 1858. His health had been impaired by his great labors at the Book Concern in New York, yet during the last years of his life, though worn with fatigue and tortured with pain, he steadily continued at his post till stricken down by a disease of the heart, thus ceasing at once to work and to live.

**Bishop Morris.**—Thomas A. Morris, the twelfth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was another of that race of western heroes whose lives and labors have so blessed the rising Republic, and so enriched the history of its largest religious communion. He was born of Baptist parentage, near Charlestown, in what is now the State of West Virginia, April 29, 1794. When about nineteen years of age he experienced the grace of God through the ministrations of the Methodist ministry, to which work he gave himself in 1814, and two years later was admitted into the Ohio Conference. In 1833 he was appointed Presiding Elder of the Cincinnati District, and in 1834 he was chosen editor of "The Western Christian Advocate," the publication of which had been ordered by the previous General Conference. In his delightful "Miscellanies," published at the Western Methodist Book Concern in Cincinnati in 1854, he gives some lively incidents of itinerant life at the West.

Morris may be counted as the last of the race of pioneer Bishops, for before the election of his next successors the era of steam had dawned, and the country had grown so rich and prosperous that the physical hardships of the former era formed but a very small proportion of episcopal experience. The saddle, as a seat of episcopal power, disappeared with Bishop Morris, though it is by no means certain that the increased rapidity and ease of transportation lightened the labors of the chief pastors of the Church; their appointments increasing in number quite as rapidly as the facilities for reaching them increased.



**South-western Methodism.**—In 1802 the name "Natchez" appears on the roll of the Western Conference, with the solitary name of Tobias Gibson attached as preacher. In 1811 Mississippi appears as a District, within the limits of the Western Conference, with one hundred and forty members, whereby it appears that Gibson had



BISHOP MORRIS.

made a permanent impression upon that portion of the Louisiana purchase.

The indistinctness of early Methodist geography appears in the fact that Natchez was at first set down as a part of the Georgia Dis-



trict, though between it and the Georgia line there was a territory large enough for two great States of the Union, absolutely unknown, except as the probable abode of wild beasts, Indians, and immigrants, and, therefore, a proper field for a Methodist itinerant to explore. Gibson was born in Liberty County, Georgia, in 1771, where he owned a handsome property, but in his twenty-second year he forsook it all for the privilege of preaching the Gospel. In 1793 he joined the itinerancy. Two years afterward he was penetrating the Holston Mountains, and in 1799 he volunteered to go to that unknown region on the banks of the southern Mississippi, though he was already broken in health by excessive labors and privations.

He started for Natchez alone, made his way on horseback to the Cumberland River, in Kentucky, traveling hundreds of miles through the wilderness, mostly along Indian trails, and having reached the river he sold his horse, bought a canoe, and putting his saddle-bags and a few other effects into it, paddled down the Cumberland into the Ohio, and thence six or eight hundred miles down the Mississippi to his destination, where he began to spread the Gospel; eighteen years before the Mississippi territory became a State of the Union. Four times he traversed the six hundred miles of wilderness which lay between him and the western-most line of the Western Conference, and in 1803 he presented himself before that body quite broken down in health, reporting eighty-seven members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Natchez, and the whole country ready for the Gospel. They were able, however, to spare him only one assistant, the demand for Methodist preachers greatly exceeding the supply; and with Moses Floyd he returned to his outpost, where the two apostles were cheered by a considerable revival of religion. At the next Conference two other preachers, Hezekiah Harriman and Abraham Amos, were sent to the aid of the heroic evangelists, and one of the first items of intelligence received was, that Gibson had gone to his long home. He died in Clairborne County, on the 5th of April, 1804, a martyr to a cause for which many a brave man wore out his life. For many years Gibson preached, professed, and practiced Christian perfection, and those who were best acquainted with him were most impressed with the completeness of his consecration to God, and his absolute devotion to his work.



**Alabama.**—With the southern section of the Western Conference on the east, and Gibson and his band of preachers on the west, the territory which is now the States of Alabama and Mississippi was sure to be included in some Methodist circuit. In 1803 the eccentric Lorenzo Dow, whose vagaries prevented his reception as a regular member of Conference, but who persisted in preaching the Gospel on his own account, wandered through this region and preached the first Protestant sermon ever heard on its soil. The Territory of Louisiana, which was first ceded to the United States under the administration of Thomas Jefferson, extended as far eastward as the Perdido River, and the Indian title to some of these lands having been extinguished, white settlements were formed on the Tensas, Tombigbee, Buckatano, and Chicksaw Rivers. It was to the frontiersmen of this semi-barbarous country that Dow carried the Gospel in 1803 and 1804.

At the session of the South Carolina Conference which was held in Charleston in 1807, Bishop Asbury called for missionaries to this south-western field—which first appears as the Okonee District, from the river of that name—in which the Tombigbee country was set down as a circuit, and Josiah Randall and Matthew P. Sturdevant were appointed to it as preachers. The next year the Tombigbee Circuit, which was separated from the civilized world by four hundred miles of Indian country, appears in the Minutes, with Michael Burdge and M. P. Sturdevant as preachers, but the name of the latter is followed by the word "missionary," which would imply that Burdge was to hold the territory already explored and Sturdevant was to push out into regions beyond.

In 1810 John S. Ford and John W. Kennon were appointed to the Tombigbee Circuit, and Ford relates that from the time they set out from the settlements in Georgia till they reached Fort Clairborne, where they commenced to stake out their circuit on the Alabama River, they slept thirteen nights under the trees. In 1811 the Tombigbee Circuit appears in the Mississippi District of the Western Conference with one hundred and forty members; and the Mississippi District, under Elder Dunwody, six years afterward took its place in the Minutes as the Mississippi Conference. This was the section of country traveled by Richmond Nolly, Lewis Hobbs, Drury Powell,



and Thomas Griffin in 1812, and from which Nolly, as has already been mentioned, passed to his martyr's crown.

**Missouri.**—In 1812 that sturdy pioneer, Jesse Walker, was sent over from Illinois to lay out a circuit in Missouri, which then appertained to the Tennessee Conference, and over which, for a considerable number of years, he ranged as "Conference Missionary," breaking up new ground and looking up new people. Already Missouri was pre-empted for Methodism. Joseph Oglesby had found time during his appointment to Illinois, in 1804 and 1805, to reconnoitre a portion of it, and in 1806—the same year that Walker entered Illinois—John Travis was dispatched to Missouri, at which time there were only about sixteen thousand inhabitants west of the Mississippi River. This young man certainly could not complain of being crowded, for his circuit, which appertained to the Cumberland District, had no boundaries whatever except the Mississippi River on its eastward side. At the next Conference Travis reported one hundred white and six colored members, and in 1816 a Conference was constituted, taking in all Missouri and Illinois, along with the south-western part of Indiana—a Conference without a boundary on the west, but officially set down as "including the last Methodist cabin toward the setting sun." The first session of this Conference was held in the Shiloh meeting-house, St. Clair County, Illinois, about ten miles from St. Louis, on the 23d of September, 1816, at which Bishop M'Kendree presided. It opened with only seven members; but before its adjournment the little company was enlarged to twenty-two, four of whom were appointed to Illinois, four to Indiana, seven to Missouri, and one to Flat Springs, in Arkansas—a wild region sixty-four miles south-west of Little Rock. On the territory included within this Conference there were known to be three thousand and forty-one members, eight hundred and forty-one of whom were in Missouri, one hundred and eight in Arkansas, nine hundred and sixty-eight in Illinois, and one thousand one hundred and twenty-four in Indiana.

**Jesse Walker in St. Louis.**—Though Walker was not the first Methodist itinerant in Missouri, he ranks as the principal founder of the denomination there. Under his energetic leadership Methodism made its way against the original Roman Catholic predominance in that country, and in 1820 he planted his standard in the Romish



metropolis of St. Louis, where previously no itinerant had found rest for the sole of his foot.

Of this new movement Bishop Morris gives the following account:—

“He commenced laying the train at Conference, appointed a time to open the campaign and begin the siege, and engaged two young preachers of undoubted courage, such as he believed would stand by him ‘to the bitter end,’ to meet him at a given time and place, and to aid him in the difficult enterprise. Punctual to their engagements, they all met and proceeded to the city together. When they reached it the Territorial Legislature was in session there, and every public place appeared to be full. The missionaries preferred private lodgings, but could obtain none. Some people laughed at them, and others cursed them to their face. Thus embarrassed at every point, they rode into the public square, and held a consultation on their horses. The prospect was gloomy enough, and every avenue seemed closed against them. The young preachers expressed strong doubts as to their being in the path of duty. Their leader tried to encourage them but in vain. They thought that if the Lord had any work for them, there to do, there would surely be some way to get to it. They thought it best immediately to return to the place from which they had come; and though their elder brother entreated them not to leave him, they deliberately shook off the dust of their feet for a testimony against the wicked city, and taking leave of Walker, rode off, and left him sitting on his horse.

“Perhaps that hour brought with it more of the feeling of despondency to Jesse Walker than he ever experienced in any other hour of his eventful life; and, stung with disappointment, he said in his haste, ‘I will go to the State of Mississippi, and hunt up the lost sheep of the house of Israel;’ and immediately turned his horse in that direction, and with a sorrowful heart rode off alone. Having proceeded about eight or ten miles he came to a halt, and entered into a soliloquy on this wise: ‘Was I ever defeated before in this blessed work? Never. Did any one ever trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and get confounded? No; and, by the grace of God, I will go back and take St. Louis.’ Then reversing his course, without seeking either rest or refreshment for man or beast, he immediately retraced his steps to the city, and with some difficulty obtained lodgings in an indifferent inn,



where he paid at the highest rate for every thing. Next morning he commenced a survey of the city and its inhabitants. He met with some members of the Territorial Legislature who knew him, and said, 'Why, Father Walker, what has brought you here?'

"His answer was, 'I have come to take St. Louis.'

"They thought it a hopeless undertaking, and, to convince him that it was so, remarked that the inhabitants were mostly Catholics and infidels, very dissipated and wicked, and that there was no probability that a Methodist preacher could obtain access to them, and seriously advised him to abandon the enterprise and return to his family, then residing in Illinois. But to all such expressions Walker returned one answer: 'I have come, in the name of Christ, to take St. Louis, and, by the grace of God, I will do it.' He presently found a large but unfinished dwelling-house, and succeeded in renting it as it was for ten dollars a month. Passing by the public square he saw some old benches stacked away at the end of the Court-house, which had been recently refitted with new ones. These he obtained from the commissioner, had them put on a dray, and removed to his hired house, borrowed tools, and repaired with his own hands such as were broken, and fitted up his largest room for a place of worship. After completing his arrangements he commenced preaching regularly twice on the Sabbath, and occasionally in the evenings between the Sabbaths. At the same time he gave notice that if there were any poor parents who wished their children taught to spell and read he would teach them five days in a week without fee or reward, and if there were any who wished their servants to learn he would teach them on the same terms in the evenings. In order to be always on the spot, and to render his expenses as light as possible, he took up his abode in his own hired house.

"The chapel room was soon filled with hearers, and the school with children. In the meantime he went to visit his family, and returned with a horse-load of provisions and bedding, determined to remain there and push the work till something was accomplished. Very soon a work of grace commenced. And it was not long before a chapel was built, a Society of seventy members organized, a flourishing school established, and thus Father Walker had succeeded in taking St. Louis.



“Having effectually broken the way open for Methodism in Missouri during sixteen years, Walker, eager for pioneer adventures, went, in 1823, to the Indian tribes up the Mississippi, where he labored until 1830, when the hero of so many fields was esteemed the man for other new work, and was appointed to the extreme North, to Chicago Mission, where he succeeded in planting Methodism in that infant city. In 1831 he was sent to the Chicago Mission, and organized many small Societies in that young and rising country. In 1832 there was a Chicago District formed, mostly of missionary ground. Walker was superintendent of this district, and missionary to Chicago town; and although he was stricken in years, and well nigh worn-out, having spent a comparatively long life on the frontiers, yet the veteran had the respect and admiration of the whole community, and in 1833 was continued in the City Missionary Station. The year 1835 closed his active itinerant life. ‘He had,’ says Cartwright, ‘done effective service as a traveling preacher for more than thirty years, and had lived poor, and suffered much; had won thousands of souls over to Christ, and firmly planted Methodism for thousands of miles on our frontier border. In 1834 he asked for and obtained a superannuated relation, in which he lived till the 5th of October, 1835, and then left the world in holy triumph.’”



Graves of Bishops Asbury, George, Emory, and Wagh.





JOSHUA SOULE, D.D.

[JOSHUA SOULE, the first Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Born August 1, 1781, at Bristol, Me.; entered the New York Conference in 1799; was ordained Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1824; seceded, and became Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1844; died in 1867.]

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

WITH the long-sought and carefully-fostered idea of "fraternity" an accomplished fact, it would be neither wise nor safe to recall too vividly the history of that great upheaval which, in 1844, resulted



in the disruption of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, in the next year, in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Only such record as is essential to a right understanding of the great principles underlying this struggle will, therefore, be given in these pages. It is a more pleasing and profitable task to record the efforts of Christian men to join once more the hearts and hands through which flows the same spiritual life-blood; to this theme, therefore, after brief mention of leading facts, the reader's attention will be invited.

As has already been seen, the first violent opposition encountered by Bishops Coke and Asbury when they commenced their episcopal labors in America, was in the southern States, on account of their preaching against slavery. These two Englishmen held "the peculiar institution" in unspeakable abhorrence, though on the other hand it will be remembered that George Whitefield so greatly admired it that he offered devout thanksgivings to God by whose providence, as he presumed, the government of the colony of Georgia was so modified as to permit him and others, like-minded with himself, to work his orphan-house plantation with labor which he should own rather than hire. Perhaps it was in view of such facts and opinions as these on the part of otherwise unquestionably great and good men, that Asbury yielded to the pressure which he was unable to resist without the probable exclusion of himself and his itinerants from the whole southern country, and suffered slave-holders to retain their membership in the Methodist Societies which were formed of the converts of southern revivals.

The conscience of the nation was not very tender on the subject of slavery during the first half century of our existence, as appears from the fact that even the slave-trade, which civilized nations have long denounced as piracy, was not prohibited by the Government of the United States until the year 1808; that being the year fixed upon in the Constitution itself for the abolition of that infamous traffic, which, however, it was fondly hoped would, before that date, die a natural death. But at the end of the twenty years during which the friends of freedom had expected to celebrate the funeral of slavery it had grown to huge proportions. The purchase of Louisiana from France, and the efforts to supply the demand for slaves over this newly-acquired territory stimulated an inter-State slave-trade, and the raising



of negroes in the Northern slave States to supply the Gulf States' markets had become a well-established and exceedingly profitable line of business. The invention of the cotton-gin, also, opened up a great southern industry for slave labor, and it was found necessary, in order to keep peace between the States, to leave the whole question of human servitude to be managed by those who were most immediately interested in it.

That which was true of the nations was true of the Churches, not only in the Methodist, but in the other great communions of America, at whose altars the owners of, and dealers in, human flesh, celebrated unchallenged the Holy Supper which commemorates the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is also an undisputed fact, that both among the slaves and their owners great numbers of apparently sound conversions occurred, and the kingdom of God moved on in spite of the sin of one race and the sorrow of another. Meanwhile, the line had been sharply drawn between free territory and slave territory, and the "irrepressible conflict" between these two sections of the country had commenced.

Through all these years there were many at the South who regarded slavery as a calamity, if not as a crime; and many at the North who publicly apologized for it. Thus when Edward Everett, thinking to gain popularity with the South, said in Congress concerning slavery, that "while it subsists, where it subsists its duties are presupposed and sanctioned by religion," John Randolph, of Roanoke, a life-long slaveholder, replied, "I envy neither the head nor the heart of that man from the North who rises here to defend slavery upon principle."\*

Besides a prohibition of trading in slaves, the Discipline contained a section on Slavery, "of which," says Dr. Myers—the best authority in the Church South on this subject—"neither party denied the validity, and it was only the northern agitators that asked any change in it." This section was as follows:—

1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore, no slave-holder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter where the laws of the State in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.

When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves by any

\* Sermon by Rev. J. C. Hartzell, D.D., Chicago, Sept. 20, 1874.



means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives.

Power is a dangerous possession, not only because it is likely to degenerate into tyranny, but also because it blunts the moral sense of him who wields it. The money power may become a monster; religious dogmatism has in it endless inquisitions, racks, and fagots; but the power implied in the ownership of men and women is the most subtle of all the serpents of this breed which, has ever crept into human society. With their social, domestic, financial, and political systems either based on or carefully adapted to negro slavery, no wonder the South resented interference with its property, its passions, and its pride; and no wonder that the worldly-minded portion of the Church, throughout all its denominational branches, both North and South, so far as they were sharers in the profits of slave labor, were very much inclined to let the institution alone.

But the conscience of a certain class of persons in the Northern States, especially in New England, had become awakened to the enormity of slavery. New England is a country of ideas, of agitations, of reforms; that way lies its pleasure and prosperity. The higher circles of society in the South, on the other hand, are by nature and habit conservative, self-satisfied, courteous and courtly; but in the blood of its plebian masses there is all the fire and fury produced by a tropical climate, the lust and passion of despotism, and the stolid prejudice which the church and the school-house have not yet eradicated or transformed.

There were, as has been pointed out by Dr. Whedon in his review of Garrisonian abolitionism,\* two sorts of abolitionists in the Methodist Church: one bent on immediate emancipation at all costs; the other, no less true to liberty, counseling calmness and patience, with the hope that their Southern brethren would see their error and open the door to the caged souls and bodies in their possession. In the Address of the Bishops at the General Conference of 1840, the Church was exhorted to moderation, in view of the apparent danger of disruption on account of the bitterness of the controversy, and

\* See "New York Tribune," September 25th, 1879.



while favoring the idea of universal liberty, these chief pastors pointed out that the unity and peace of the Church could only be preserved by the cessation of the torrents of hard words which were continually pouring forth through newspaper organs and on conference floors. "Our General Rule on Slavery," says the Address, "which forms a part of the Constitution of the Church, has stood from the beginning unchanged, as testamentary of our sentiments on the principle of slavery and the slave-trade. And in this we differ in no respect from the sentiments of our venerable founder, or from those of the wisest and most distinguished statesmen and civilians of our own and other enlightened and Christian countries. The simply holding or owning slaves, without regard to circumstances, has at no period of the existence of the Church subjected the master to excommunication. . . . We cannot withhold from you, at this eventful period, the solemn conviction of our minds that no new ecclesiastical legislation on the subject of slavery, at this time, will have a tendency to accomplish these most desirable objects," namely, "to preserve the peace and unity of the whole body, promote the greatest happiness of the slave population, and advance generally, in the slave-holding community of our country, the humane and hallowing influence of our holy religion."

At this Conference the Rev. Robert Newton, D.D., appeared as the representative of the English Wesleyan Conference, by whom that Church sent its fraternal greetings, and a special message concerning slavery, to which an official response was made containing the following, among other statements, which after this lapse of time are more conspicuous for their moderation than their righteousness: "But our Church is extended through all the States; and it would be wrong and unscriptural to enact a rule of discipline in opposition to the Constitution and laws of the State on this subject." And again: "Under the administration of the venerated Dr. Coke, it was attempted to urge emancipation in *all* the States, but the attempt proved almost ruinous, and was soon abandoned by the doctor himself. While, therefore, the Church has encouraged emancipation in those States where the laws permit it, and allowed the freed man to enjoy freedom, we have refrained, for conscience' sake, from all intermeddling with the subject in those other States where the laws make it criminal." The reply quotes the instructions of Secretary Watson to the British Wes-



leyan missionaries in the West Indies in 1833, as follows: "As in the colonies in which you are called to labor a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the Committee most strongly call to your remembrance what was so fully stated to you when you were accepted as a missionary to the West Indies, that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without, in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition." Such was the official position of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1840: a position which the more ardent abolitionists regarded with horror, and which, at all hazards, they determined to change.

Even in New England the Annual Conferences were divided among themselves; and in some of these Conferences charges of evil speaking, contumacy, and the like, were brought against certain of the more vehement brethren who were thought to transgress the bounds of Christian courtesy and charity in their anti-slavery speeches and sermons. This of course only increased the excitement. Anti-slavery societies were formed in Churches and in Conferences; and so thoroughly was the Church permeated by this leaven of reform that classes, Sunday-schools, missionary meetings, and love-feasts, were in constant danger of being turned into schools of anti-slavery debate. The Southern Methodists, as might have been expected in view of Northern agitation, settled back more determinedly than ever upon their pro-slavery education, traditions, and habits; defied the reformers, denounced them as schismatics who were attempting to destroy the Constitution of the Church itself, and by way of reprisal for the damage which their side of the question was receiving, began to insist that slave-holding should not be considered a bar to any office in the gift of the Church.

**Bishop Andrew** was elected to the Episcopacy by the General Conference of 1832. Early in 1844 he married a lady of Georgia, who was the owner of slaves, and thus became constructively a slave owner. It is said that before this time he had inherited two or three negroes, whom he was prevented by the laws of Georgia from manumitting, and whom he, therefore, held by necessity; and he himself declares, that, in order not to be compromised by this property possessed by his wife, he made over to her all his right, title, and interest therein. Nevertheless, as husband and wife are one,





JAMES OSGOOD ANDREW.

Second Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born in Georgia, May 3, 1794; entered the South Carolina Conference in 1812; was ordained Bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1824; seceded in 1844; and became Bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Died in New Orleans, March 2, 1871.]

Bishop Andrew was denounced as a slave-holding Bishop, and straight-way became the target for abolition arrows from all over the North.

Petitions, memorials, and addresses were poured in upon the General Conference from all quarters, having reference to this great question, and the tide of excitement was so strong as almost to carry the



body off its feet. Dr. Capers of South Carolina—afterward Bishop—and Dr. Olin, of the New York Conference, offered a resolution providing for a "Committee of Six to be appointed to confer with the Bishops, and report within two days, as to the possibility of adopting some plan, and what, for the permanent pacification of the Church," which committee was appointed, consisting of Drs. Capers, Olin, Winans, Early, Hamline, and Crandall; and during their consideration of the momentous subject intrusted to them, the whole Conference observed a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.

But peace was not as yet in sight. On the 18th of May, Bishop Soule, a native of the State of Maine, who had been promoted to the Episcopacy from the New York Conference, and who was recognized as one of the great minds of the Church on the conservative side of the argument, reported "that after a calm and deliberate investigation, the committee was unable to agree upon any plan of compromise." Five days afterward, a resolution was offered by the Rev. J. B. Finley, and the Rev. J. M. Trimble, D.D., of the Ohio Conference, as follows:—

*Whereas*, The Discipline of our Church forbids the doing any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant General Superintendency, and whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant General Superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains."

Over this resolution the battle was finally joined, and the echoes of that great debate have even now scarcely died away. The like of it was probably never heard in any ecclesiastical assembly in America. All the powers of logic, all the arts of rhetoric, all the fires of enthusiasm, all the fury of passion, all the intensity of outraged conscience, all the resistance of a sense of wrong, and all the determination of both sanctified and unsanctified will, were exhausted, not on the mere verbal sense of the resolution, but on the great system of sin and misery which lay behind and under it. Nevertheless there was much outward courtesy and little undue vehemence of manner in the debate.



At length, on the 30th of May, Bishop Hedding, that majestic man, who was claimed by the abolitionists as their prince and leader, yet who possessed sufficient weight of character and reputation for probity to command the respect of the slave-holding party, suggested that the Conference hold no session on the afternoon of that day, and thus allow the Bishops time to consult together, with the hope that they might be able to offer a plan of adjusting present difficulties; but this calm council was not at all suited to the heated temper of the assembly. Under lighter pressure both parties might have accepted it as a possible road out of their confusion; but as it was, both parties seemed to suspect a snare. It is said that the delegates of the New England Conferences were immediately called together to consult upon the alarming prospect of a slight healing of this great wound; which meeting resulted in the unanimous determination, "that if Bishop Andrew should be left by the General Conference in the exercise of Episcopal functions it would break up most of the New England Conferences, and that the only way to be holden together would be, to secede in a body and invite Bishop Hedding to preside over them." \*

On the first of June this great battle was lost and won. Finley's resolution was adopted by a vote of one hundred and eleven yeas to sixty-nine nays. Of the minority, fifty-seven were delegates from slave-holding Conferences, and twelve from non-slave-holding Conferences; but only one Southern delegate, and he a transfer from a Northern Conference, voted with the majority. It was a solid South against a still divided North, though in the last named section of the Church antislavery principles had now become almost universal. Two days afterward, on the morning of June 3, Dr. Capers offered a paper looking to a division of the Church, which should be inaugurated at the then present General Conference, and in the afternoon of the same day Dr. Longstreet presented what is known as the Declaration of the Southern Delegates, which was signed by the entire delegations, except two, from the slave-holding Conferences—fifty-one names in all. The substance of this Declaration was, that the continued agitation on the subject of slavery and abolition, and the action of the General Conference in suspending Bishop Andrew, rendered the continuance of the jurisdiction of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal

\* Dr. James Porter in the "Methodist Quarterly Review," as quoted by Dr. Myers.





WILLIAM CAPERS, D.D.

Third Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born in Carbondale, Pa., Jan. 26, 1790; received into the South Carolina Conference in 1808; ordained Bishop in the M. E. Church, South, in 1846. Died at Anderson, S. C., Jan. 29, 1855.]

Church in the South an impossibility; which Declaration was referred to a committee who were afterward—on motion of the Rev. J. B. M'Ferrin, of Tennessee—instructed, “to advise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the Church, provided they cannot, in their judgment, devise a plan for an amicable adjustment of the differences now existing in the Church on the subject of slavery.



DECLARATION OF THE SOUTHERN DELEGATES. 631

On the 8th of June, Drs. Durbin, George Peck, and Elliott, were appointed to prepare a statement of facts connected with the proceedings in Bishop Andrew's case. On the same day the following preamble and resolution, offered by the Committee of Nine, were adopted, which the Church South, at that time and ever since, has held to be a virtual and valid "Plan of Separation," under which their Church was subsequently organized:—

*Whereas*, A Declaration has been presented to this General Conference, with the signatures of fifty-one delegates of the body, from thirteen Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States, representing that, for various reasons enumerated, the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church-organization cannot be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General Conference as now constituted; and whereas, in the event of a separation, a contingency to which the Declaration asks attention as not improbable, we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity; therefore,

*Resolved*, By the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, that should the Annual Conferences in the slave-holding States find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the northern boundary of such connection: All the societies, stations, and Conferences adhering to the Church in the South, by a vote of a majority of the members of said societies, stations, and Conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the Southern Church; and the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall in nowise attempt to organize Churches or societies within the limits of the Church South, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein; it being understood that the ministry of the South reciprocally observe the same rule in relation to stations, societies, and Conferences adhering, by vote of a majority, to the Methodist Episcopal Church; provided, also, that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and Conferences bordering on the line of division, and not to interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated.

This resolution was passed by a vote of one hundred and thirty-five in the affirmative and eighteen in the negative; the southern delegates thus taking the responsibility of withdrawal, and the whole body of their northern brethren, with only eighteen exceptions, opening the door for their departure.

Just what was signified by this "Plan of Separation" has been matter of prolonged dispute, but, happily, now its significance is no



longer of any practical importance. As an answer to the vexed question that has for years been tossed back and forth between the two divisions of American Methodism, "Who was responsible for the secession in 1844, the North or South?" it may be said: New England was prepared to secede rather than accept slavery in the episcopacy; the South was prepared to secede rather than yield their views. The years and days showed the North to be in the majority, and thus, as a simple question of numbers, it was of necessity the South which must secede, since it would not recede. Southern authors declare, that the North was bent on changing the Constitution of the Church; and doubtless, in the light of subsequent events, that which was once charged upon them as a fault would now be claimed as an honor.

According to the Discipline, any change in the Constitution of the Church required not only a two-thirds vote of the General Conference, but also the aggregate vote of three fourths of all the members in attendance upon the Annual Conferences throughout the Church, to which bodies the proposed change must be referred. The "Plan of Separation," although voted with such equanimity by the General Conference, failed to receive the required three-fourths vote in the Annual Conferences; the slave-holding Conferences with one voice approving, and the non-slave-holding Conferences dividing upon the change.\*

**Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.**—What was to be done with the brethren whose right to depart was thus denied, or by what means they were to be reached after having gone out in spite of all opposition, those who voted against ratifying the "Plan of Separation" have not explained; nor was such explanation necessary, for the South, regarding their own action as final, at a Convention which met at Louisville, Ky., on the first day of May, 1845, proceeded to organize the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, according to the provisions of the above-mentioned "Plan of Separation." Dr. Lovick Pierce, of the Georgia Conference, was elected president *pro tem.*, Bishops Soule and Andrew being afterward requested, by unanimous vote, to assume their customary rights as presiding officers.

\* The aggregate vote by Annual Conferences stood 2,135 for, to 1,070 against the change of rule. The whole number of traveling preachers at that time was 4,621, of whom 3,633 were full members and voters. Of this number, 3,205 voted on the change of restriction, 483 being absent or not voting.—*Appeal to the Records*, by E. Q. Fuller, D.D.



The right of the General Conference to suspend a bishop without any form of trial, as was done in the case of Bishop Andrew, was then, and has always since been, disputed by the South, they claiming that the episcopacy is a co-ordinate branch of Church authority along with the General Conference, and that the only legal mode of proceeding against a bishop is according to the form of trial set forth in the Discipline. The report of the Committee on Church Organization, by the adoption of which the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was formally constituted, sets forth the fact that the action of the General Conference in the case of Bishop Andrew was extra-judicial, there being no law covering the case. It also declares that "throughout the Southern Conferences the ministry and membership of the Church, amounting to nearly five hundred thousand, in proportion of about ninety-five in a hundred, admit a division of jurisdiction indispensable to the welfare of the Church in the Southern and South-western Conferences of the slave-holding States; and this fact alone must go far to establish the right, when it demonstrates the necessity, of the separate jurisdiction contemplated in the plan of the General Conference and adopted by that body, in view of such a necessity as likely to exist." \*

After a brief review of the history of, and arguments for, separation, in which it is stated "that every plan of reconciliation and adjustment regarded as at all eligible or likely to succeed was offered by the South and rejected by the North, the following preamble and resolutions were submitted and adopted *seriatim*, the first resolution having only four votes in the negative, and all the others being unanimously adopted:—

Such we regard as the true position of the Annual Conferences represented in this Convention. Therefore, in view of all the principles and interests involved, appealing to the Almighty Searcher of hearts for the sincerity of our motives, and humbly invoking the Divine blessing upon our action,

Be it *Resolved*, By the delegates of the several Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the slave-holding States, in General Convention assembled, That it is right, expedient, and necessary to erect the Annual Conferences represented in this Convention into a distinct Ecclesiastical Connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as at present constituted; and, accordingly, we, the delegates of the said Annual Conferences, acting under the Provisional Plan of Separation adopted by the General Conference of 1844, do solemnly declare the jurisdiction

\* REDFORD'S "History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."



hitherto exercised over said Annual Conferences by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, entirely dissolved; and that said Annual Conferences shall be, and they hereby are, constituted a separate Ecclesiastical Connection, under the Provisional Plan of Separation aforesaid, and based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprehending the doctrines and entire moral, ecclesiastical, and economical rules and regulations of said Discipline, except only in so far as verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization; and to be known by the style and title of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

*Resolved*, That while we cannot abandon or compromise the principles of action upon which we proceed to a separate organization in the South; nevertheless, cherishing a sincere desire to maintain Christian union and fraternal intercourse with the Church, North, we shall always be ready kindly and respectfully to entertain, and duly and carefully consider, any proposition or plan having for its object the union of the two great bodies in the North and South, whether such proposed union be jurisdictional or connectional.

*Resolved*, That this Convention request the Bishops presiding at the ensuing sessions of the border Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to incorporate into the aforesaid Conferences any societies or stations adjoining the line of division, provided such societies or stations, by the majority of the members, according to the provisions of the Plan of Separation aforesaid, request such an arrangement.

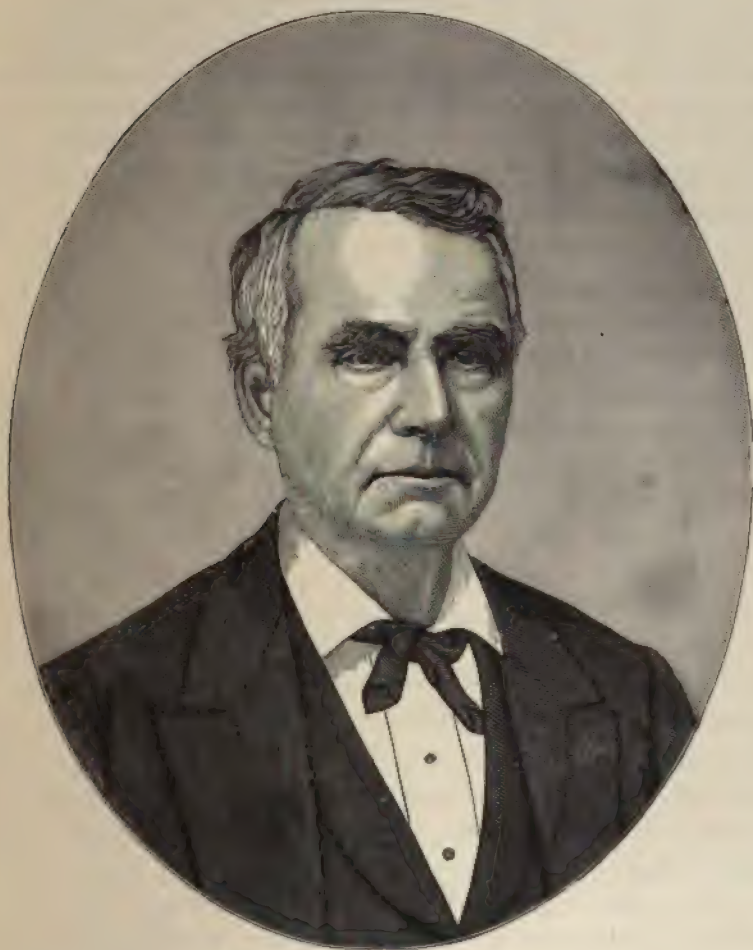
*Resolved*, That answer the second of 3d section, chapter 1st, of the Book of Discipline, be so altered and amended as to read as follows: 'The General Conference shall meet on the first of May, in the year of our Lord 1846, in the town of Petersburg, Va., and thenceforward, in the month of April or May, once in four years successively, and in such place and on such day as shall be fixed on by the preceding General Conference,' etc.

*Resolved*, That the first answer in the same chapter be altered by striking out the word 'twenty-one,' and inserting in its place the word 'fourteen,' so as to entitle each Annual Conference to one delegate for every fourteen members.

*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed, whose duty it shall be to prepare and report to the General Conference of 1846 a revised copy of the present Discipline, with such changes as are necessary to conform it to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

This action was taken on the 17th of May, 1845. Two days afterward, Bishops Soule and Andrew were requested by the Convention "to unite with, and become regular and constitutional Bishops of, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." The door was open for any Societies along the border which might desire to cast in their lot with the





ROBERT PAINE, D.D.

Fourth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born November 12, 1799, in Pierson County, N.C.; entered the Tennessee Conference in 1818; was ordained Bishop in 1846. His residence is Aberdeen, Miss.]

new organization, and a committee was appointed to prepare and report to the General Conference of 1846 a revised copy of the present Discipline, with such changes as might be necessary to conform it to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

**Border Troubles.**—The attempt to divide men according to their opinions, and at the same time to follow a geographical line, is



one which must always be attended with more or less difficulty, in proportion to the intensity of the opinions which are thus territorially laid off. On both sides of the line which at that time separated freedom from slavery, there were persons whose views did not accord with those of the majority of their neighbors. There were Societies north of the line a majority of which were in sympathy with the South, and there were Societies widely scattered through the South which repudiated the "Plan of Separation." Especially was this true in Kentucky, Missouri, and Arkansas, from which States petitions signed by nearly three thousand persons were presented to the General Conference after the adoption of the "Plan of Separation," complaining of its effect upon them, and asking for recognition as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as the appointment of ministers from its body to their pulpits; a fact which since that time has been frequently recited in the sharp controversies over this question as a justification of the parent Church in holding its ground at the South.

The "Plan of Separation" also gave a large opportunity for disputes concerning the titles to Church property; and for years there were border wars between the two Churches, distressingly similar in temper, if not in manner, to those which history records between neighboring nations, each of which is too fond of the territory of the other. There was also a question concerning the rights of the Church South in the property of the Book Concern at New York and Cincinnati; which property, after much litigation, was adjudged to be divided according to the claim of the Southern Church.

The General Conference of 1848 inherited, to a considerable extent, the troubles of that of 1844. The prompt departure of the Church South after the action in the case of Bishop Andrew was at first thought to be a relief, and an action which, therefore, should be concurred in as curing, though by a desperate remedy, the agitation which for years had raged like a fever in the ecclesiastical body. But the narrow escape of the ratification of the "Plan of Separation" by three-fourths of the Annual Conferences was seized upon by certain brethren at the North as a basis for a claim whereby the division of the Church property might be refused. This scheme found, as usual, advocates who were governed more by their feelings than their judg-



ment; technical points of law were raised against a division of the Church property in the Book Concern; and for the sake of a few thousands of dollars, and also for the sake of defending opinions already expressed, certain great minds in the Church kept up the agitation which otherwise gave promise of subsiding: however, a charitable judgment should be formed of this partisanship, since the roar of battle was still sounding in their ears and the hot blood of contention was still boiling in their veins.

The first General Conference of the Church South was held at Petersburg in 1846, at which an organization, closely copied from that of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was effected; and at which, as a token of brotherly kindness toward their former co-religionists, the Rev. Dr. Lovick Pierce was appointed a fraternal messenger from the Church South to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and as such he appeared at the General Conference of 1848. By this time that body had committed itself to the policy of non-recognition of the Church South, in view of the failure of the "Plan of Separation" in the Annual Conferences, and to receive Dr. Pierce as a delegate therefrom might be deemed an inconsistency.

Dr. Pierce proposed that the General Conference to which he was accredited should first settle the question of fraternity, and afterward give attention, on a brotherly basis, to the financial and territorial difficulties which had grown up between the two Churches: but certain leaders in the controversy protested that to receive Dr. Pierce at all, except as a commissioner to settle difficulties, would be to recognize the status of the Church South as a co-ordinate branch of American Methodism; a course which would not only imperil certain property rights claimed by the parent Church, but also override the opinions which certain leaders had set forth; and Dr. Pierce, chagrined as well as grieved, after a courteous and dignified statement of his views, and those of the body which he represented, took his departure, and thus the door through the division wall was bolted and barred.

The separation being now complete, the General Rule on Slavery in the Discipline of the mother Church was changed, so as to forbid slaveholding as well as slave-trading, and thus, in theory if not in practice, the Methodist Episcopal Church was saved from that great sin. The South, of course, expunged the rule against slavery.



**Methodism During the War.**—The same cause which had now rent the Church asunder at length produced a like calamity in the nation. Perhaps the success of the "Plan of Separation" was an added encouragement to the State-rights party of the South, in their efforts to establish a slave-holding Confederacy which should be to the original United States of America what slave-holding Methodism had become toward the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is no part of the province of this history to recall the sins and sorrows of the great Civil War in our country. Methodism, as "The Church of the People," both North and South, was doubtless in the forefront of the fight on both sides; for the war was but a fighting over again, with powder and shot, the very same battle which, with words for weapons, had called forth the energy, the zeal, and the wrath of the two parties in the Annual and General Conferences of the Church. The Methodism of the North proudly records the honor conceded to it by President Lincoln, of sending "more soldiers to the field and more nurses to the hospitals than any other religious body:" and doubtless the Methodism of the South was no whit behind us in sustaining its political opinions at the point of the bayonet, in nursing its sick and dying soldiers, and in sending up its prayers to Heaven for blessings on what was foredoomed to be a lost cause. For four terrible years brethren by thousands, who had once been members of the same Christian communion, rose up in what each believed true patriotic wrath, and sought to kill one another; and it must ever be but mournful satisfaction for any good man to know that the hands on his side of the conflict scattered the most death and dug the most graves. Let this bloody record pass. The great Head of the Church alone can know against what souls, both North and South, to write the awful charges of hatred, devastation, cruelty, and death; as also he alone can pardon the penitent for these great offenses against his law and his Church.

**The Methodist Episcopal Church Again in the South.**—During the progress of the Civil War the armies of the North occupied and held some important positions in the southern territory, and the clergy therein were forbidden to pray in their churches for the success of the Confederacy. In New Orleans, especially, General Butler announced that such supplications would be punished by military law, on the ground that such prayers encouraged the



secessionists to hold out against the Union forces, and that the ministrations of the southern clergy were firing the southern heart.

Among the churches which were closed by military authority were some belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and these, by order of the War Department at Washington, were placed at the disposal of Bishop Ames as the representative of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The order under which Bishop Ames acted was as follows:—

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
WASHINGTON, NOV. 30, 1863.

To the General commanding the Department of the Missouri, the Tennessee, and the Gulf, and all Generals commanding Armies, Detachments, and Corps and Posts, and all Officers in the Service of the United States in the above-mentioned Department:—

You are hereby directed to place at the disposal of Rev. Bishop Ames all houses of worship belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in which a loyal minister, who has been appointed by a loyal Bishop of said Church, does not now officiate.

It is a matter of great importance to the Government, in its efforts to restore tranquillity to the community and peace to the nation, that Christian ministers should, by example and precept, support and foster the loyal sentiment of the people. Bishop Ames enjoys the entire confidence of this Department, and no doubt is entertained that all ministers appointed by him will be entirely loyal. You are expected to give him all the aid, countenance, and support practicable in the execution of his important mission.

You are authorized and directed to furnish Bishop Ames and his clerk with transportation and subsistence, when it can be done without prejudice to the service, and will afford them courtesy, assistance, and protection.

By order of the Secretary of War,

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
Assistant Adjutant-General.

Similar authority to that conferred upon Bishop Ames was given to the representatives of the Northern Baptist, Presbyterian, and other Churches; the Northern generals in command at the South being ordered to allow loyal ministers of these various denominations to occupy the vacant pulpits of their several churches in the captured territory; some of which were vacant by the flight of their regular clergy, and others by the operation of military law.





HENRY B. BASCOM, D.D.

Fifth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born May 27, 1796, at Hancock, N. Y.; joined the Ohio Conference in 1818; was ordained Bishop in 1850; died September 8, of the same year, at Louisville, Kentucky.]

During the occupation of New Orleans the Northern officers and soldiers there stationed rallied around the chief representative of Northern Methodism, the Rev. Dr. J. P. Newman, who by Bishop Ames was appointed to the Carondelet-street Church; one of the finest houses of worship belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. For a considerable time this was the leading Church in the city.



The holding of Christian sanctuaries as trophies of war is no new thing in the history of so-called civilized warfare. In the Revolutionary War the armies of King George had made riding-schools, magazines, and barracks of American houses of worship; and during the Civil War numbers of the Southern churches shared the same fate. Of this, however, the South made no special complaint—at least no complaint in the name of religion; but when Northern Methodists, by military authority, possessed themselves of the property of their former brothers, an estrangement between these two sections of Methodism was produced, wider and more bitter even than that occasioned by the War itself. This led, in certain quarters, to the raising of the old legal question as to the unconstitutional departure of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and it was hinted that perhaps the original body, from which the South had seceded, might have some constructive claim to the property in dispute.

After the conclusion of the war these Churches were all restored to their original owners; but Northern Methodism having now planted itself in the Southern territory, and taken under its special care and tutelage many thousands of the freedmen—who could hardly expect to receive much aid in religion and learning from the Churches controlled by their former masters—prepared to hold its ground and extend its power throughout the Southern country. For a time the progress of religion among the ex-slaves, under the operation of the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as under the working of similar organizations of other Christian communions, was rapid; schools, colleges, and theological seminaries for black scholars, teachers, and preachers, sprung up as if by magic; and when the smoke of battle had been cleared from Southern eyes, they beheld a strong and flourishing body of colored Methodists in the South who held the most loyal and grateful allegiance to the Northern branch of Methodism. The same was true of other Northern branches of the Church.

After the assassination of President Lincoln the administration of President Johnson revived the Southern spirit, and rekindled the hope of secessionists; and a systematic, and already largely successful, attempt was made to gain by policy what had been lost by war. It is no unkindness to the Southern people to say, in this connection, what their chief editors and orators have publicly declared, namely, that the



issues which were settled adversely to them in the late appeal to arms were only temporarily settled. In these statements they are to be credited with a terrible consistency, which began at length to manifest itself not only in rhetoric, but by many acts of violence and crime against Methodists, black and white. A single issue of the "Christian Advocate," in 1879, contains a record republished from the "Methodist Advocate," at Atlanta, of thirty-four Methodist preachers and teachers, both white and black, who were beaten, robbed, and some of them murdered, in the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee, for the crime of preaching in colored congregations and teaching in colored schools under the direction and patronage of the Northern Methodist Episcopal Church, against which body the ruffianism of the South seemed to have especial wrath.

It was, let us believe, not because of, but despite of, the influence of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, that such great iniquities were perpetrated without fear of punishment; these being only a few among the thousands of similar outrages and murders which followed the nominal conclusion of the greatest civil war that ever cursed the earth; nevertheless, in certain quarters these outcroppings of barbarism were made use of to widen, if possible, the estrangement between the two sections of American Methodism, which, as would appear, had already become hopelessly divided.

**Fraternity Re-established.**—In view of the terrible array of facts just mentioned nothing less than a miracle of grace could have been sufficient to reconcile these divided brethren; yet in spite of the Church War and the Civil War, with all their accompanying evils and horrors, there was, down deep in the hearts of the best men in both sections of the Church, so much of love for their common faith and order, and so much of pride in their common heroic history, that these deserts and mountains by which each had been separated from the other, as it might be to the very ends of the earth, have now, thanks be to God! been overpassed, and the best men in both bodies, who always stood nearest to each other, have once more joined fraternal hands.

The history of Christendom furnishes no parallel to this reconciliation. Let us hope that as now His grace has shown so glorious a triumph, the other and shorter distances of temper if not of doctrine,





JOHN EARLY, D.D.

Sixth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born January 1, 1786, in Bedford Co., Va.; entered the Virginia Conference in 1807; was ordained Bishop in 1854; died Nov. 5, 1873, at Lynchburgh, Va.]

which have divided the body of Christ may be overpassed, and thus the prayer of our Lord may be speedily answered, that in heart, if not in name, his people shall be one. If these Methodist brethren can shake hands over such a chasm, there is no conceivable gulf wide enough to keep God's people apart!

In the month of April, 1869, at a meeting of the Bishops of the



Methodist Episcopal Church held in Meadville, Pennsylvania, the first official overture of friendship on the part of the Northern Church to the Church South was decided upon. The Episcopacy has always maintained its traditional conservatism. Into this upper and inner circle the wilder passions which sway the membership and the ministry in their great assemblies very seldom enter; thus it was that in spite of the zeal of victory on one side, and the rage of defeat on the other, the Bishops of the two sections of Methodism maintained personal, if not official, friendship. By this time the progress of religion and of events had removed much of the rancor which, in the first instance, had led the South to secede; in the next, had moved the General Conference to reject the Fraternal Messenger and Message of the Church South; and which, through all the years of civil strife had surged and boiled until, on either hand, political opinions had been mistaken for Christian doctrines, and patriotic enthusiasm for religious zeal. The Bishops, being by their office and their opportunity the least removed from their brethren across the line, and remembering that it was their turn to make advances, reached out their hands, in the persons of Bishops Janes and Simpson, to their brethren the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by whom this first fraternal delegation from North to South was courteously received at the city of St. Louis on the 7th of May, 1869.

The communication of Bishops Janes and Simpson was an overture for reunion under the vote of the General Conference of 1868, at Chicago, at which a Commission of eight members had been appointed to treat with similar commissions from any other Methodist Church which might desire a union with them; an action which had primary reference to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, but which was extended so as to cover all cases that might arise.

On the 14th of May the Southern Bishops responded in a dignified though friendly document; taking exception to the statements of Bishops Janes and Simpson, "that the great cause which led to the separation from us of both the Wesleyan Methodists of the country and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has passed away," and replying, "Slavery was not in any proper sense the cause, but the occasion only, of that separation, the necessity of which we regretted as much as you." The document also recalls the refusal of the General



Conference to accept the Southern Fraternal Delegate, the Rev. Dr. Pierce, and reasserts his final words spoken on that occasion, when he said, "You will therefore regard this communication as final on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. She can never renew the offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States. But the proposition can be renewed at any time, either now or hereafter, by the Methodist Episcopal Church; and if ever made upon the basis of the 'Plan of Sep-



CENTENARY M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH, ST. LOUIS, MO.

aration,' as adopted by the General Conference of 1844, the Church South will cordially entertain the proposition."

Their reply also states, with entire frankness, the southern objections to the conduct of northern missionaries and agents who had been sent into their portion of the country with the "avowed purpose to disintegrate and absorb our Societies." "We do not say," continues the document, "that our own people have been in every instance of these unhappy controversies and tempers without blame as toward you; but this we say, if any offenses against the law of love, committed





HUBBARD H. KAVANAUGH, D.D.

Seventh Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born January 14, 1802, in Clark County, Ky.; entered the Kentucky Conference in 1824; was ordained Bishop in 1854. His residence is Louisville, Ky.]

by those under our appointment—any aggressions upon your just privileges and rights are properly represented to us—the representation will be respectfully considered, and we shall stand ready, by all the authority and influence we have, to restrain and correct them.”

The next step toward fraternity was the visit of Bishop Janes and the Rev. William L. Harris, D.D., then Missionary Secretary at New



York, to the General Conference of the Church, South, at Memphis, in 1870. That eminent scholar and divine, then the President of Drew Theological Seminary at Madison, New Jersey, the Rev. John M'Clin-tock, D.D., was originally appointed as the colleague of Bishop Janes, but upon his death, March 4, 1870, Dr. Harris was appointed in his stead.

The reception of these two delegates by the southern Conference was conspicuous both for its dignity and its courtesy. They still maintained their original position, and while acknowledging the desirability of fraternal relations, recalled the oft-repeated statement of the initial step essential thereto, namely, A recognition of the validity of the original "Plan of Separation," which was the basis of the organization of the Church South.

The General Conference of 1872 authorized the Bishops to appoint a delegation, consisting of two ministers and one layman, to represent them at the General Conference of the Church South, to be held in Louisville, Ky., in 1874. The proceedings on that memorable occasion are fully set forth in the pamphlet published by the Book Concerns of the two Churches, entitled "Formal Fraternity," to which the readers of this volume are referred for the admirable addresses in full of Drs. Albert S. Hunt, Charles H. Fowler, and Gen. Clinton B. Fisk, on the one hand, and the response of the committee to whom their words and their mission were referred.

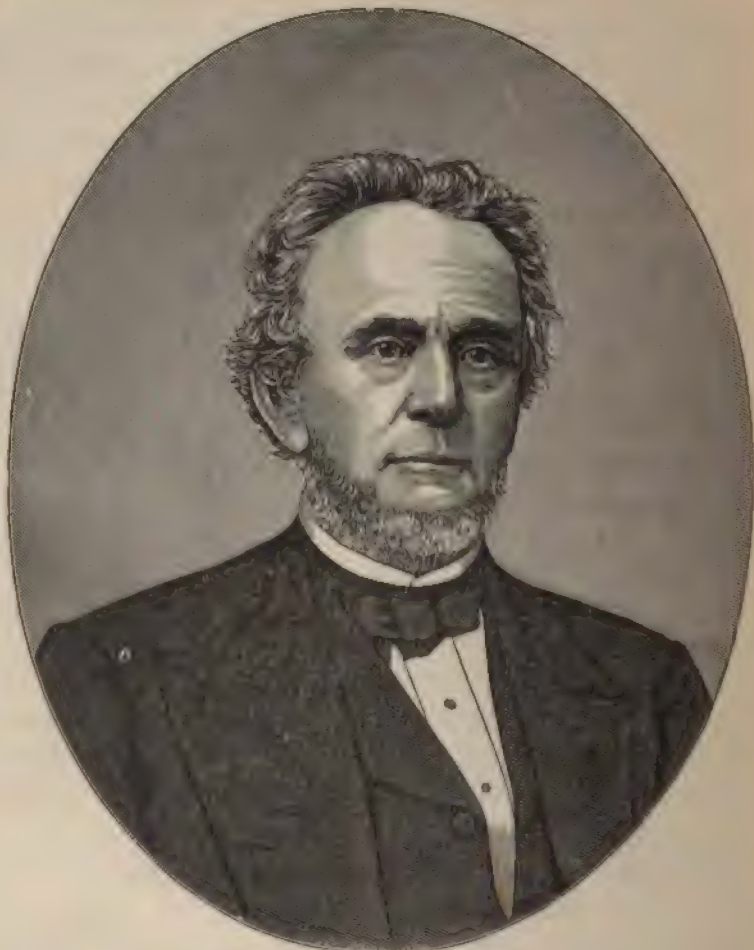
As a fitting response to these Fraternal Representatives the Louisville Conference adopted the following resolutions:—

*Resolved*, 1. That this General Conference has received with pleasure the fraternal greetings of the Methodist Episcopal Church, conveyed to us by their Delegates, and that our College of Bishops be, and are hereby, authorized to appoint a Delegation, consisting of two ministers and one layman, to bear our Christian salutations to their next ensuing General Conference.

*Resolved*, 2. That, in order to remove all obstacles to formal fraternity between the two Churches, our College of Bishops is authorized to appoint a Commission, consisting of three ministers and two laymen, to meet a similar Commission authorized by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to adjust all existing difficulties.

In pursuance of the above, the College of Bishops of the Church South, at their annual meeting in May, 1875, appointed the venerable





GEORGE F. PIERCE, D.D.

Eighth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born in Greene County, Ga., February 3, 1811; entered the Georgia Conference in 1831; was elected Bishop in 1854. His residence is Sparta, Ga.]

Rev. Lovick Pierce, D.D., the Rev. James A. Duncan, D.D., President of Randolph Macon College, Va., and Landon C. Garland, LL.D., the Chancellor of the Vanderbilt University, as Fraternal Delegates to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and the Rev. E. H. Myers, D.D., Rev. R. K. Hargrove, D.D., Rev. Thomas M. Finney, D.D., the Hon. Trusten Polk, and Hon. David Clopton, as Commissioners to meet a similar Commission from the North.



**A Memorable Day.**—The appearance of the Fraternal Delegates of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at Baltimore, in 1876, marked the actual commencement of fraternal relations, which the best men in both parties had so long and earnestly desired. The 12th of May was the time appointed for their reception, and on this day the Conference reached its climax of interest. It was a scene never to be forgotten. The vast assemblage was moved to a solemn tenderness of feeling which words cannot describe. The revered Bishop Janes presided, and at the hour appointed the Rev. Dr. Foss, President of the Wesleyan University, came forward to present to the Chairman the Rev. Dr. Duncan, who was then introduced to the Conference, which body arose to receive him. In like manner next appeared the Rev. Dr. Newman, introducing Chancellor Garland, who was also introduced to and received by the Conference with the same token of respect.

The Rev. Lovick Pierce, D.D., to the great regret of the Conference, failed to appear. He commenced his journey toward Baltimore, in spite of the burden of more than ninety years which was upon him, but was obliged to stop on the way, and could only send the greeting which he had so greatly desired to bring. In his address he thus struck the key-note of the restored harmony: "We protest against any longer use of the popular phrase 'two Methodisms' as between us. There is but one Episcopal Methodism in the United States of America, and you and we together make up this one Methodism." In reference to the points at issue, he wrote: "We do not believe that these difficulties ought ever to be discussed in either General Conference at large. They are delicate, sensitive things, never to be settled by chafing speeches; but, as we believe, can be speedily prayed and talked to death by a joint board of discreet brethren intent upon Christian peace."

After reading the communication of Dr. Pierce, which was listened to as the words of a beloved father in Israel, the Rev. Dr. Duncan made his memorable address, which had in it something of the peaceful spirit of heaven, to which he was so soon to ascend.

"Charity," said he, "is a provision, not for unity but for diversity. . . . Heaven send us rest from these miserable, unhappy controversies! . . . I am aware, Mr. President, that some persons will not cease from that kind of warfare in which they have so much pleasure. But, sir, harmony with such people is





DAVID SETH DOGGETT, D.D.

Ninth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born in Virginia, in 1810; entered the Virginia Conference in 1839; was ordained Bishop in 1866. Resides in Richmond, Va.]

simply impossible; the only harmony they ever know is of some unhappy tune that they alone can sing. . . . Our proposal is: Let us appoint wise men to adjust all questions of real conflict between these two Churches: let us pray the God of all wisdom and peace to direct them to right conclusions; and then bury forever the weapons of war, and move on to the better, brighter conquests of peace!

"And now, sir, again I ask, What is Christian fraternity, and on what ground do we establish it? I answer explicitly, Christian fraternity is the reciprocal





recognition of Christ in each other. Where no such relations to Christ exist there can be no fraternity. There is but one principle of communion in Christianity. St. John has stated it clearly and beautifully: 'Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. . . . If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

"If fraternity is any thing, it is, at least, an end of strife—it is peace; it is a delightful silence after a long battle; it is the calm after the noise of waters and the tumult of the elements when the Master has said, "Peace, be still." It is an end of the calamitous spectacle of Christian antagonisms which only bad men applaud. It is exchanging discord for harmony, and broken and jarring strings for harps sweetly tuned and full of sacred music. Ah, brethren, in that eternity to which we are all rapidly advancing, when earthly enmities and all the fiery passions that consume human peace shall have sunk into ashes, and petty strifes of time shall seem but miserable follies of which we are ashamed, how many men will then wish their bitter words had been unsaid!"

After Dr. Duncan came Chancellor Garland, with a brief address admirably befitting the occasion.

To these words, so fitly spoken, the Conference and the vast representative Methodist assembly listened with emotions that swept the whole circuit of their Christian feeling, now calling forth cheers and hallelujahs, and now melting the great assembly to tears. In due time the Committee to whom had been referred the question of appointing a Commission reported the following, which was cordially adopted:—

TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE: Your Committee to whom was referred a resolution adopted by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and borne to us with the Christian salutations of our sister Church, providing for the appointment of a Commission on the part of that body, to meet a similar Commission authorized by the Methodist Episcopal Church, beg leave to report that they recommend the adoption of the following resolution:—

"Resolved, That in order to remove all obstacles to formal fraternity between the two Churches, our Board of Bishops are instructed to appoint a Commission, consisting of three ministers and two laymen, to meet a similar Commission authorized by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and to adjust all existing difficulties."

CLINTON B. FISK,	F. C. HOLLIDAY,
A. C. GEORGE,	JOHN D. BLAKE,
OLIVER HOYT,	WILLIAM R. CLARK,
JAMES W. W. BOLTON.	





WILLIAM M. WIGHTMAN, D.D., LL.D.

Tenth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born in Charleston, S. C., January 29, 1808; entered South Carolina Conference in 1828; ordained Bishop in 1866. He resides at Charleston, S. C.]

The following Commissioners were appointed under the foregoing resolution: Morris D'C. Crawford, D.D., Hon. Enoch L. Fancher, LL.D., Erasmus Q. Fuller, D.D., General Clinton B. Fisk, John P. Newman, D.D.

**Meeting of the Joint Commission.**—On the 17th of August, 1876, the Joint Commission representing the two General Conferences met at Congress Hall, Cape May, New Jersey. It is



worthy of notice that the Southern Commission included the author of a volume entitled "Disruption of the Church," (Rev. E. H. Myers, D.D.,) while on the Northern Commission was the Rev. Dr. Fuller, whose "Appeal to the Records" was published as a review and a rejoinder. The Commission from the North was perhaps as thoroughly representative as any equal number of men could have been. It included the veteran New York Presiding Elder, Dr. M. D'C. Crawford; the eminent jurist, Dr. E. L. Fancher; the vigorous editor, author, and commander of the Atlanta out-post, Dr. E. Q. Fuller; the sagacious, warm-hearted, eloquent Christian soldier, General Clinton B. Fisk; and the clerical diplomatist, Dr. J. P. Newman.

The first important step was the formal announcement by the Southern Commission that they were empowered to treat only on the basis of the much-contested "Plan of Separation," to which announcement response was made in substance, that, though there might be differences of opinion as to the force and meaning of that well-known document, there was nothing in the mind of the Northern Commission to prevent their entering upon the business in hand on the basis indicated by their Southern brethren. To remove all obstacles to formal fraternity between the two Churches the following Declaration was unanimously adopted:—

DECLARATION AND BASIS OF FRATERNITY BETWEEN SAID CHURCHES.

Each of said Churches is a legitimate Branch of Episcopal Methodism in the United States, having a common origin in the Methodist Episcopal Church organized in 1784.

Since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was consummated in 1845, by the voluntary exercise of the right of the Southern Annual Conferences, ministers, and members, to adhere to that Communion, it has been an evangelical Church, reared on scriptural foundations, and her ministers and members, with those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have constituted one Methodist family, though in distinct ecclesiastical connections.

Thus this great historic contention came to an end, and the final adjustment of actual cases of dispute was now in order.

On taking up the Church property difficulties the following preliminary rules for adjustment were adopted:—

RULES FOR THE ADJUSTMENT OF ADVERSE CLAIMS TO CHURCH PROPERTY.

RULE I. In cases not adjudicated by the Joint Commission, any Society of either Church, constituted according to its Discipline, now occupying the Church





ENOCH M. MARVIN, D.D.

Eleventh Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born in Warren County, Missouri, June 12, 1823; joined the Missouri Conference in 1841; was ordained Bishop in 1866; died November 26, 1877.

Property, shall remain in possession thereof; *provided*, that where there is now in the same place a Society of more members attached to the other Church, and which has hitherto claimed the use of the property, the latter shall be entitled to such possession.

RULE II. Forasmuch as the Joint Commission have no power to annul decisions respecting Church Property made by the State Courts, the Joint Commission ordain in respect thereof:—



1. In cases in which such a decision has been made, or in which there exists an agreement, the same shall be carried out in good faith.

2. In communities where there are two Societies, one belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church and the other to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which have adversely claimed the Church Property, it is recommended that without delay they amicably compose their differences irrespective of the strict legal title, and settle the same according to Christian principles, the equities of the particular case, and, so far as practicable, according to the principle of the foregoing rule. But if such settlement cannot be speedily made, then the question shall be referred for equitable decision to three arbitrators—one to be chosen by each claimant from their respective Societies, and the two thus chosen shall select a third person, not connected with either of said Churches, and the decision of any two of them shall be final.

3. In communities in which there is but one Society, Rule I shall be faithfully observed in the interests of peace and fraternity.

RULE III. Whenever necessary to carry the foregoing rules into effect, the legal title to the Church Property shall be accordingly transferred.

RULE IV. These Rules shall take effect immediately.

Under the operation of these rules all the several cases relative to Church titles in New Orleans and elsewhere were taken up, and one by one were adjudged without the least dissension; and when the last case was reached, to the great delight of the Joint Commission, the fact was recorded that every vote on every question had been unanimous. Thus, as the venerable Father Pierce had prophesied, in this small company of good men these harassing difficulties had been "prayed and talked to death."

At the conclusion of the session the respective Secretaries of the two commissions, Gen. Clinton B. Fisk and the Rev. T. M. Finney, were directed to prepare a pamphlet to be published simultaneously by the Book Concerns at New York and Nashville, setting forth the proceedings and results of this Commission, to be preceded by an outline history of the steps whereby the appointment of this Commission had been reached, from which report the record of these pages is made up. The Chairman of the Southern Commission, the Rev. E. H. Myers, D.D., died by yellow fever in Savannah, on Tuesday, September 26th, 1876, and a tribute to his memory, by his brethren of the Northern Commission, closes the above-mentioned report; which, until the next session of the respective General Conferences of the two Churches,





HOLLAND NIMMONDS MYTIERRE, D.D.

Twelfth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born February 28th, 1824, in Barnwell County, S. C.; entered the Virginia Conference in 1845; was made Bishop in 1866. Resides in Nashville, Tenn.]

may be regarded as the charter of fraternity, the declaration of Christian fellowship, the constitution of peace.

That such a conclusion should have been reached, with all the cruel facts and harrowing memories of thirty years of discord, war, and strife surging up by times in the minds of these men, who had seen and suffered so much on both sides of the line of separation, is the



best and largest evidence afforded in this era of the Church of the power of heavenly grace to make all crooked things straight and all rough places plain. It is of God. Let all good men give thanks.

**Statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.**—Not only does the Church South occupy the former Slave States in which it was organized, but it has also extended its Conferences into California, Oregon, Illinois, Kansas, and Colorado. Its Missionary Society, managed by a board of which the Rev. Thomas O. Summers, D.D., the book-editor of the denomination, is President, the Rev. N. H. Lee, D.D., is Vice-president, the Rev. A. W. Wilson, D.D., is Secretary, and James W. Manier, is Treasurer, has home missionary stations in the Territories of Montana, Columbia, and New Mexico, with foreign missions in Mexico, Germany, Brazil, and China.

The summary of statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1879, is as follows: Traveling preachers, 3,457; superannuated, 306; local, 5,762; white members, 783,211; colored, 1,428; Indians, 4,698—total ministers and members, 798,862; increase in 1878, 24,120. Infants baptized, 25,049; adults, 38,071; Sunday-schools, 7,262; teachers, 54,867; scholars, 391,293—increase in 1878, 28,130. Collected for Conference Claimants, \$60,425 71; for Foreign and Domestic Missions, \$110,551 17. This includes only what was reported in the Annual Conferences—not special donations, nor the collections of the Woman's Missionary Society.

**Education.**—The chief educational institution of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is the Vanderbilt University, at Nashville, Tenn., of which L. C. Garland, LL.D., is Chancellor, assisted by a faculty of eleven professors in the Literary Department; four in the Biblical Department, at the head of which is the Rev. Dr. Summers; four in the Law Department, at the head of which is Thomas H. Malone, M. A.; fourteen in the Medical Department, the president of which is Thomas L. Madden, M.D.; besides which there is a School of Pharmacy and a School of Dentistry, and four college fellowships.

The 27th of May is Founder's Day, being the birth-day of the late Cornelius Vanderbilt, whose munificent gift of over half a million dollars laid the foundation of this well-appointed university.

Besides this, there are thirty-two colleges and seven other schools and academies under the patronage of the Church, ten of which are in





JOHN CHRISTIAN KEENER.

Thirteenth Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

[Born in Baltimore, February 7th, 1819; entered Alabama Conference in 1843—  
was elected Bishop in 1870. His residence is New Orleans, La.]

Virginia, six in Tennessee, and smaller numbers throughout the other  
Southern States.

P. S.—Just as this chapter passes into the hands of the printer comes the intelligence of the death of that eminent and venerable Christian minister, the Rev. Lovick Pierce, D.D., at his residence, Sparta, Ga., November 10, 1879, in the 75th year of his ministry and the 95th of his age. May his memory be an added bond of brotherly kindness between the two Churches, both of which were served by his labors, blessed by his example, and bereaved by his death.





THE GERMAN METHODIST BOOK CONCERN AND TRACT HOUSE, BREMEN.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### GERMAN METHODISM.

THE great tide of German immigration into the western part of the United States began about 1830. Spiritually, these immigrants were as sheep without a shepherd, having but few evangelical pastors, while many of their preachers were as unbelieving as they were corrupt, a condition which caused the attention of the Church to be earnestly directed to them.

It now became only a question of finding the right man to begin the work among them; and, behold! God in his providence had him already in training.

**William Nast** was born June 15th, 1807, at Stuttgart, in the kingdom of Würtemberg; entered the lower theological seminary of the Lutheran Church, at Blaubeuren, in 1821; and in his eighteenth year he, with his class, to which also the well-known Dr. David Strauss belonged, was promoted to the university at Tübingen, to continue his studies for the ministry of the State Church. After two years, however, he retired from service in the State Church, as he was no longer



willing to adhere to a form of faith which he then could not heartily defend, and paid out of his own means for that part of his course of study which had been provided by the State. For a time he led a private life, and at length, guided by providence, arrived at New York in 1828. Some time afterward he made the acquaintance of Lieut. Whiting, of West Point, and through his influence obtained the appointment of librarian, and professor of the German Language in the West Point Military Academy, where, in the midst of surroundings apparently poorly suited for deep religious convictions, it pleased God to awaken his conscience to the fact that he was originally destined to be a preacher of the Gospel.

In 1835 Nast, who had wandered about in great distress of mind, found himself at a camp-meeting on the Monongahela River, where he was abundantly blessed, and where he also made the acquaintance of the famous Dr. Elliot, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At this camp-meeting there was, among others, an aged "mother in Israel" from Pittsburgh, who, as in prophetic vision, declared to the "poor, troubled German" what his future course was to be. Taking him by the hand, she exclaimed, "William, be of good cheer! God is with you. You have been awakened and converted, and the full salvation by faith will surely follow. You shall preach the Gospel to your countrymen, and many of them shall be converted to God. Soon after this the call for a German-American missionary was made, and in the fall of 1835 Nast was admitted to the Ohio Conference on trial, and sent as missionary to the Germans of Cincinnati, where he arrived in September of the same year. During this Conference year he labored under great difficulties and with small success, yet with untiring zeal, among his countrymen, visiting them at their homes and telling them of the Crucified One.

In the autumn of 1836 he was appointed to travel as missionary on Columbus District, in the Ohio Conference—another hard field of labor, in which he endured many privations, traveling a circuit of three hundred miles. In the fall of 1837 he was returned to Cincinnati. This year the Lord blessed his efforts with more visible success. He was enabled to begin a Sunday-school, and at the close of the year had a society of twenty-six members. During this year he also translated into German the General Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church and



the Wesleyan Catechism, which works may be designated as the beginning of the literature of German Methodism.

An increased desire manifested itself in the year 1838 to reach the German people, and voluntary contributions for the founding of a German religious newspaper poured in so liberally that the Ohio Conference appointed Nast as editor of a German paper, the first issue of which appeared January 1st, 1839, under the name of "Der Christliche Apologete." From this time forward Nast devoted himself to this paper and to manifold other literary works.

**Other German Missionaries.**—Peter Schmucker, a talented Lutheran preacher who had joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, was Dr. Nast's successor at Cincinnati, (1838,) and labored there for two years with much success. During his ministry there eighty persons joined the Church, among them L. S. Jacoby, the founder of Methodism in Germany.

From Cincinnati the work spread into the surrounding country. A Society was soon organized at Lawrenceburgh, Ind., where Dr. Nast occasionally preached, and to which belonged Michael and George L. Mulfinger, both of whom did excellent work as preachers. The former, after many years of successful labor, entered into the joy of his Lord, while the latter is still in the harvest, officiating as Presiding Elder in the Chicago German Conference.

In Lawrenceburgh the Society visibly increased, under the labors of a local preacher by the name of Hofer. He afterward moved to New Orleans to preach the Gospel to the Germans of that city.

As early as July, 1838, eight or ten Germans joined the English Methodist Episcopal Church at Pittsburgh, Pa. In September of this year Dr. Nast was invited to visit these Germans, at Pittsburgh, to which call he cheerfully responded, and a German Methodist Episcopal Church of twenty-five members was established.

In a similar way the Church at Wheeling, West Va., was founded. Several devout Germans, who had met there for some time for religious edification, asked for a preacher as soon as they heard that the Methodists sent out German ministers, and Rev. J. Swallen, one of the first converts under the labors of Dr. Nast in Cincinnati, was sent to them. With some of the first numbers of the "Christliche Apologete" in his satchel he traveled up the Ohio, offering the paper to



people every-where, preaching the Gospel as often as he had opportunity, and meeting with large success. In eight months his Society numbered eighty members, and by them was erected the first German Methodist Church in the world. Swahlen is one of the chief pioneers of German Methodism both East and West.

Henry Koeneké, who was converted in Germany, united with the Church at Wheeling, acted for a time as a class-leader, but was soon called to the ministry, and worked for more than twenty-five years with much success in Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, and Illinois. He has long since been gathered to the fathers, but two of his sons, William and Henry F. Koeneké, followed their father's footsteps, and are in the midst of the harvest in the St. Louis German Conference.

From some central points the work of German Methodism spread along the Ohio; among others, to a Swiss settlement known as Buck Hill Bottom. Here L. Nippert was converted at the age of thirteen. He was afterward admitted to the Ohio Conference, sent to Germany in 1850, and at present is director of the Martin Mission Institute at Frankfort-on-the-Main. The German Methodist preachers also entered Monroe County, in which the city of Marietta is situated, and under the labors of Koeneké, Riemenschneider, and Danker many souls were converted. These afterward emigrated farther west, and were active in extending the work west of the Mississippi River.

The Sciota Mission, for instance, took its course from the mouth of the Sciota up the valley, and included, even at an early period, the city of Chillicothe. Rev. G. A. Breunig, a converted Romanist, was sent as pastor to this mission in 1840.

During the same year the mission at Barrsvillé, Ky., was founded by P. Schmucker, who was sent to this place from Cincinnati. The opposition which German Methodism met with in that city was certainly no trifling matter. The saloon-keepers, infidels, and Catholics united to exterminate the "Methodist heretics," so that Schmucker's life was often imperilled. Notwithstanding this, a Society of ninety members was founded during the first year, and a church built and dedicated in 1841. This was the second German Methodist Episcopal Church that had been erected. Among those who were converted during the first year there were the four brothers Barth, who formerly traveled about the States giving musical entertainments. Three of



them eventually entered the ministry, and two, John H. and Philip Barth, are still in the traveling connection.

From this time the German preachers pushed on toward the West and North-west to Missouri and Illinois, and reached St. Louis and Chicago in 1840-41, which years may be noted as especially fruitful to German Methodism.

**German Methodism in St. Louis.**—In August, 1841, Bishop Morris complied with the oft-expressed desire of the Missouri Conference, by sending L. S. Jacoby to St. Louis, for the purpose of founding a German Mission there. The missionary began the work among the German population, numbering about 15,000, in a small frame chapel given him by the Presbyterians. Here, also, the German daily press was full of venomous opposition to German Methodism, and sought to incite the people to acts of violence; yet the cause gained a firm footing on the Mississippi in spite of the revilings of the infidels and the denunciations of Romish priests, and at the close of the second year the Society gathered here numbered over one hundred members, and owned a pretty little church. During this first epoch German Methodism embraced within its fold some of the neglected Germans of New Orleans.

But how did German Methodism come there?

By means of a teamster who had been converted at Cincinnati. His comrades often found him praying in the stable, and his conduct was so exemplary that they esteemed him highly, and gladly responded to his invitation to spend the last evening of the year (1841) with him in religious exercises. The Lord greatly blessed the efforts of the teamster, for during the same evening several persons found peace with God. Now a preacher was called, and P. Schmucker came, worked a few weeks, organized a Society, and made preparations for the building of a church. Such was the beginning from which sprang the German Societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church as well as of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in New Orleans and Texas.

At this time German Methodism also progressed eastward of the Alleghanies, and first of all planted itself in the city of New York. C. H. Doering founded the first mission in that city, and labored for sixteen months on that difficult field with gratifying success. His successor, Christian Lyon, a German by birth, had served in the English



speaking ministry for several years, and now devoted his whole energy and talents to the German cause. He was noted for extraordinary gifts as a speaker, served as preacher and Presiding Elder with great success, and died happy in the Lord on the 21st of May, 1868.

In the year 1844, at which time a new epoch commences, we find German Methodism firmly established on the Ohio, the central Mississippi, in many places of Missouri and Illinois, in New Orleans, and in New York. Less than ten years had elapsed since Dr. Nast (1838) had been sent to the neglected Germans in Cincinnati, and they now (1844) numbered 19 missions, 20 missionaries, and 1,500 members. The mustard seed had not only taken root, but was growing, and gave promise of becoming a considerable tree.

**German Conferences Organized.**—A new period in the history of German Methodism begins with the year 1844. Up to this time the German missions in the various conferences had been distributed so as to belong to the English Presiding Elders' district in which they happened to be located. It is obvious that, in dividing the work thus, inconveniences and disadvantages in transferring and supplying missionaries were experienced. Having taken notice of this, the General Conference of 1844 passed a resolution to form the German work into districts irrespective of Conference limits, and to place such districts in charge of German Presiding Elders; the German preachers in each district to be members of that Conference to which the Presiding Elder may belong. Two such districts were formed in the west, under the presiding eldership of Revs. P. Schumucker and C. H. Doering, and both were attached to the Ohio Conference. Henceforth German Methodism assumed a more compact form. The German districts were now credited from year to year with what they accomplished; missions could be supplied with less trouble, and the German preachers were enabled to complete the Course of Study so essential to them, as prescribed by the Church.

About this time (1844) the successful mission at Quincy, Ill., was begun by Philip Barth, also the Leadmines Mission, near Galena, by W. Schreck, and the first missions in Iowa and Wisconsin.

The year 1846 was fruitful for German Methodism. Among other missions those at Detroit, Mich., Chicago, Ill., and Milwaukee, Wis., were commenced. Though the opposition at Detroit was great, still



Hartmann experienced such wonderful aid from the Almighty that the work there was firmly established and placed in a flourishing condition. In Milwaukee the untiring W. Schreck, long since deceased, was the pioneer, and in Chicago Philip Barth was its founder. In all of these cities, especially at Chicago, German Methodist Societies flourish and exert a powerful influence. Among the first who were converted at Chicago we may mention Wm. Pfäffle, now Presiding Elder in the Southern German Conference, and C. A. Loeber, formerly one of the leading preachers of the Chicago German Conference, and now Presiding Elder at Milwaukee. The future of German Methodism in the North-west is very promising.

It was respected to such a degree that, as early as 1848, it was represented at the General Conference by two delegates, Rev. W. Nast, D.D., of the Ohio Conference, and Rev. L. S. Jacoby, D.D., of the Illinois Conference. This General Conference renewed the resolution which had been so beneficial, according to which the Bishops had full authority to form German districts regardless of Conference limits, and instructed the Book Agent to publish, in German, and as soon as possible, certain theological works of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1852 the German work was represented at the General Conference by three, in 1856 by four, and in 1860 by five German delegates.

In the General Conference of 1864 were seven German delegates. At their request the German work was divided into three Annual Conferences; namely, the North-western, South-western, and Central. As this begins another period in German Methodism, the statistics of 1864 are here inserted: Preachers in charge, 238; membership, 20,293; Church property, valued at \$710,824. The mission in Germany, already in a prosperous condition, is not included in the above figures.

**The German Mission.**—The Methodist Episcopal Church began her missionary work in Germany at a time when Germany, in all directions, was gaining more liberal ideas in religious matters; namely, in the year 1848. As we have said before, Dr. Nast had traveled to Germany in 1844, for the purpose of founding a mission there if it were possible. But he was obliged to report that, although the people were willing to listen to the Gospel, the time for such an undertaking had not yet come, because the officers of State assumed too hostile an attitude against it.



The revolution of 1848 opened the way, and as a call for help had long since been heard from the Fatherland, the Bishops and Missionary Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church resolved, in 1849, to found a new mission in Germany. The superintendency of this mission was given to Bishop Morris, who, in the month of June, 1849, appointed Rev. L. S. Jacoby, then Presiding Elder of the Quincy District, Ill., as missionary.

**Dr. Jacoby**, the founder of our mission in Germany, relates his conversion as follows: "I lived at Cincinnati in 1839, intending to commence to practice as a physician, and supported myself by giving lessons in the German language. One evening one of my pupils asked me to attend a German Methodist Church with him. As I never had heard of such a Church, I thought at first it must be a place of amusement; a theater, or some place of that description. Having, however, been instructed as to what it really was, I had at first no inclination to go, but finally was persuaded by my friends to accompany them. A local preacher, Brother Breunig, made his first attempt in preaching that evening, and spoke of "the prodigal son." Although his pronunciation was new to me, since I came from a different part of Germany than he, still I lost all inclination to ridicule. On the contrary, I was surprised that an uneducated layman could preach with such effect. On the next Sabbath evening I heard Dr. Nast preach from the text, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," etc. Satan whispering in my ear, told me to stare steadfastly at the minister to get him to laugh, which I did without accomplishing my object. On the contrary, I soon was an attentive listener. "Perhaps," said Dr. Nast, "there is a Saul among us whom the Lord wants to convert into a Paul." These words touched my heart. Thursday evening next I visited a class-meeting, where I was attracted by the harmony and love which I noticed among these people. Upon invitation, I called on Dr. Nast at his home on Friday, gained confidence in him, and opened my heart to him. He directed me to the Lamb of God that bears the sins of the world, and that evening I prayed to God for the first time. Leaving my former companions, I joined the Church on the Monday before Christmas, 1839, and sought forgiveness of my sins from that time until New Year's day, when I found peace with God."

Since that time Jacoby has been active in the vineyard of the Lord.



The history of the mission in Germany, which he founded in 1849, is the subsequent history of his life. In 1872, his health failing, he returned to America, was engaged for a short time as Presiding Elder in the South-western Conference, and died in the triumph of faith in 1874.

Toward the close of 1855 Methodism had become known in all Germany, and had founded missions in the North, in the Central States, in the Palatinate of the Rhine, in the South, and in Switzerland. In February, 1856, the superintendent followed the invitation of the Missionary Committee, and came to America to represent the mission at the General Conference held at Indianapolis, where the privilege of organizing a Conference in Germany was granted. On September 10, of the same year, the first Mission Conference in Germany was opened in the chapel of the Tract Establishment, consisting of the following members: L. S. Jacoby, C. H. Doering, L. Nippert, H. Nuelssen, and E. Reimenschneider. The first-mentioned had been appointed Chairman by the Bishops, and C. H. Doering was elected Secretary by the Conference.

In the year 1858 was established the Methodist Theological Seminary. The beginning was very insignificant, and was made at Bremen. Its growth, however, was rapid, and the present Martin Mission Institute at Frankfort grew out of this germ. The Catechism used at present by the German Methodists was also written by Dr. Nast, upon order of the General Conference, and afterward the same was translated into the English language.

**Dr. Liebhart.**—In the year 1872 a German Sunday-school and Tract Department, similar to that of the English, was established, and a monthly magazine for the family, issued in the German language, of which the Rev. H. Liebhart, D.D., an eminent German scholar and writer, a native of Carlsruhe, Germany, was elected Editor, as well as of the entire Sunday-School Department. He edits the following periodicals: "Die Sontag-Schul Glocke," (Sunday-School Bell,) 26,500 subscribers; "Bibelforscher," (Bible Lessons,) 24,000 subscribers; "Haus und Herd," (The German Magazine,) 7,200 subscribers; "Der Biblische Bildersaal" (Leaf Cluster) and "Für Kleine Leute," (Pictorial Paper for Little Folks.)

As may be noticed from the above list, the German Sunday-



School Department supplies all necessary periodicals both for the Sunday-school and the family. These are not translations of similar English periodicals, as many think; they all are written expressly to meet the wants of the Germans, and breathe the true spirit of Methodism, but do not follow literally any similar English paper.

Hitchcock & Walden, the Agents of the Western Methodist Book Concern, have published more books in the German language than any other publishing house in the United States; and, in addition to these, they keep in stock complete works of other publishing houses. The literature of German Methodism has outgrown the period of infancy, and has become a faithful, effective assistant of the Church. It exerts great influence upon the German population, and, without doubt, will grow still more efficient.

**The Institutions of German Methodism.**—As well as to Church literature German Methodism gave early attention to Church educational interests. The following is the list of its schools:—

1. The Central Wesleyan College at Warrenton, Mo.

The Endowment Fund amounts to only \$25,000, and the college is maintained principally by tuition fees.

Dr. H. Koch is the president, aided by a faculty of four professors. It possesses a fine three-story college building, 90 by 55, a library of more than 2,500 volumes, and a good museum.

The Central Wesleyan Orphan Asylum is in a good condition, and has afforded refuge to many a poor orphan.

2. The Orphanage and College, at Berea, O. Dr. W. Nast is nominally president, but does not reside at Berea.

The college possesses one of the finest churches of German Methodism, a good school-building, a commodious hall for male students, a ladies' hall, and residences for all of the professors. The endowment fund amounts to \$55,000, and is being increased continually. The institution rests upon a sound basis. It owns property to the amount of \$125,000, and to the present time its growth has been unusually prosperous. It has been especially useful in educating young men called to the ministry, and has been until now the biblical seminary of German Methodism, although attempts are now being made to carry out theological courses in other German Methodist institutions.

The German Orphan Asylum at Berea possesses a large, massive



stone building, where about forty orphans are lodged. About \$4,000 is spent annually by the German Methodists in maintaining it. Rev. H. Herzer is the competent and well-beloved foster-father of the orphans.

3. The Normal School at Galena, Illinois, was called into existence by the German Methodists in 1868, for the purpose of educating competent English-German teachers under Christian influence. A massive structure, formerly used as a hospital, was purchased from the United States for \$6,000. Instruction was begun immediately. The Rev. Dr. Frederick Kopp, the Presiding Elder of the Galena District, is at present the head of the institution. It has lately added a theological course to its curriculum.

4. The German College at Mount Pleasant, Iowa, was founded in 1873, and bears the same relation to the Iowa Wesleyan University as the German Wallace College does to Baldwin University, at Berea, O.

5. The Martin Mission Institute in Germany. To which institution W. F. Warren was sent from America as professor. A new turning-point was occasioned by his arrival in the institution, and he became a great blessing to the students, and through them to the whole mission. Dr. Hurst succeeded him in 1866, who was succeeded by Dr. Sulzberger. At present Rev. L. Nippert serves as principal.

**Present Condition and Influence of German Methodism.**—The German work at present includes eight Conferences; namely, the Central, Chicago, North-west, St. Louis, Western, East, and Southern German Conferences in the United States, and the Conference of Germany and Switzerland, besides the missions in Louisiana and California. Exclusive of those who are to-day gathered in German Societies, thousands of Germans have joined English Societies, and exert a good influence there.

German Methodism is not instrumental in saving souls alone, but it has proved itself an element in promoting civilization; it assists in establishing American institutions, and making them effective; it is the champion of these among a part of our population that can be reached only in their own tongue; it propagates genuine Protestant principles in circles to which it alone can gain access by its special missionary work.

In the Methodist Episcopal Church, German Methodism at present enjoys unbounded confidence. The fears which arose, especially



upon the organization of German Conferences, that eventually it would separate altogether from the Church and form an independent organization, have been entirely dispelled. The Church knows that it has no members more loyal than the German Methodists; that they exert a salutary influence; and that the English Methodists can learn many things from their German brethren; for example, the maintenance of class-meetings, the faithful observance of all Church collections, instruction of the youth in the Catechism by the pastor at regularly-appointed seasons, simplicity in mode of living, etc.

Thus German Methodism has been a blessing to the world, and is an added power to the Church. In order to show its present condition in figures, we append, in conclusion, the complete statistics for the year 1878:—

## STATISTICS OF THE GERMAN CONFERENCES OF THE M. E. CHURCH, 1878.

CONFERENCES.	NUMBER.				BAPTISMS.		CHURCH PROPERTY.					
	Members on Probation.	In Full Membership.	Local Preachers.	Deaths.	Children.	Adults.	Churches.	Probable Value.	Parsonages.	Probable Value.	Buildings and Repeating Churches and Parsonages.	Present Debt.
East.....	493	8,217	89	47	642	4	41	\$487,000	24	\$68,800	\$7,468	\$8,731
Central.....	1,094	11,822	101	121	971	15	181	575,150	72	98,750	22,761	44,842
Chicago.....	879	5,130	56	56	601	7	191	205,400	47	39,200	4,121	20,343
North-west.....	1,069	5,232	65	60	660	9	94	164,750	47	40,625	12,565	15,783
South-west.....	1,070	10,295	153	140	1,162	7	174	480,100	78	70,400	22,825	27,500
Southern.....	161	924	12	9	163	6	28	32,625	13	6,200	2,725	4,573
In California.....	49	289	5	4	87	5	5	66,000	3	6,000		
In Louisiana.....	18	147	2	2	22	1	3	10,000	1	2,000	1,160	4,500
In America.....	4,778	36,556	493	496	4,868	49	622	\$1,976,925	285	\$382,175	\$78,120	\$204,440
In Germany.....	2,287	9,080	48	157	812	..	71	444,617	50	88,545	4,827	245,956

## CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BENEVOLENT PURPOSES.

CONFERENCES.	Conference Claims.	MISSIONARY COLLECTION.			Foreign Women's & Miss. Society.	Collection for Building Churches.	Tract Collection.	Sunday-school Union.
		In Churches.	Sunday-schools.	Total.				
East.....	\$271 70	\$1,089 26	\$1,656 41	\$2,755 67	\$31 50	\$255 63	\$95 00	\$72 23
Central.....	1,445 70	4,594 65	1,240 09	5,846 67	25 50	4,358 00	220 80	208 01
Chicago.....	506 05	2,153 67	989 29	3,165 02	10 00	4,153 30	77 80	78 45
North-west.....	287 88	1,809 18	835 08	2,752 20	112 25	8,330 55	51 60	62 90
South-west.....	1,182 78	8,814 61	1,178 21	4,996 82	44 50	1,825 25	166 86	108 05
Southern.....	61 35	567 50	261 48	845 00	4 25	50 15	11 00	13 50
In California.....	57 00	128 00	27 50	155 50	2 00	25 00	13 00	18 00
In Louisiana.....	11 65	69 70	74 25	163 95	1 00	9 60	4 25	1 90
In America.....	\$3,774 05	\$14,890 55	\$6,380 81	\$20,710 89	\$231 00	\$14,006 08	\$639 51	\$607 06
In Germany.....				1,530 00		121 75	445 00	47 50



## CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BENEVOLENT PURPOSES.—(Continued.)

CONFERENCES.	Freedmen's Aid Society.	Schools and Education.	American Bible Society.	Collection for Bishops.	Salaries of Preachers and Presiding Elders.	
					Claims.	Received.
East.....	\$89 75	\$62 50	\$52 90	\$180 50	\$27,465 00	\$36,682 00
Central.....	145 02	454 34	245 94	367 15	60,098 06	56,890 54
Chicago.....	50 52	179 56	105 18	250 14	28,200 00	27,093 85
North-west.....	56 85	654 35	67 78	238 81	30,651 00	27,311 00
South-west.....	111 45	263 86	191 87	417 62	58,772 00	56,395 00
Southern.....	6 25	43 10	13 30	34 60	4,220 00	3,082 15
In California.....	2 00	22 00	.....	.....	.....	.....
In Louisiana.....	2 10	2 05	2 00	5 00	3,400 00	2,277 00
In America.....	\$473 94	\$1,681 85	\$709 00	\$1,502 82	\$211,566 06	\$199,631 84
In Germany.....	.....	1,851 00	67 50	.....	11,359 25	11,359 25

## SUNDAY-SCHOOL STATISTICS.

CONFERENCES.	Schools.	Teachers and Teachers.	Scholars.	Scholars 15 years old and over.	Scholars under 15 years age, except Infant Scholars.	Scholars in Infant Classes.	Average attendance of teachers and scholars.	Teachers and Officers that are Church Members.	Scholars that are Church Members.	Conversions.	Library Books.	Total expenses for this year.
East.....	40	810	4,994	518	8,103	1,370	4,171	699	956	95	9,956	\$2,954 60
Central.....	176	2,211	10,644	2,749	5,085	2,663	10,089	1,947	1,959	441	17,951	5,521 00
Chicago.....	113	1,125	5,319	760	2,402	1,804	4,871	1,100	623	193	10,104	3,690 86
North-west.....	146	1,241	5,058	1,303	2,234	1,274	4,691	1,216	1,387	281	7,548	1,753 00
South-west.....	229	2,110	10,894	2,327	4,750	2,796	9,970	1,944	2,077	845	14,921	4,681 89
Southern.....	30	168	1,011	176	667	258	784	155	185	49	1,105	454 25
In California.....	6	78	504	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
In Louisiana.....	3	61	424	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	460 00
In America.....	752	7,804	38,828	7,844	16,160	10,160	34,576	7,101	6,587	1,404	61,618	\$19,465 80
In Germany.....	332	1,380	16,476	.....	6,151	6,151	.....	.....	.....	70	8,192	2,221 00







WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY, SALEM, OREGON.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### LATER CHARACTERS AND EVENTS.

**Pacific Coast Methodism—Oregon.**\*—In 1832 four Oregon Indians, belonging to the Flat Head Tribe, appeared in the city of St. Louis, saying they had come to inquire about "the great book." By some unknown means they had heard of the white man's Bible, and, led by that light which "lighteth every man that cometh into the world," they made their long journey over mountains and deserts to the principal trading-post on the Mississippi. This singular and im-

\* The author gratefully acknowledges the kind assistance of Bishop Peck in furnishing materials for this topic.



pressive fact excited great interest among the eastern Churches, and in 1834 Jason Lee and his cousin, Daniel Lee, under the auspices of the Methodist Missionary Board, crossed the continent and established the first mission in Oregon.

Jason Lee, the pioneer missionary to Oregon, was a Canadian by birth, who received an education at the Wesleyan Academy at Wilbraham, Mass., then under the care of Dr. Wilbur Fisk. Like many other students of this institution in its early days, Lee was already far past his youth; a strong man physically, intellectually, and spiritually, with a clear head, a sound judgment, and of a courageous and devoted spirit. It was his intention to spend his life in missionary work among the Canadian Indians, under the direction of the British Wesleyan Missionary Society, but when his old preceptor, Dr. Fisk, heard the Macedonian cry of those four red men from Oregon, he at once nominated Lee as the man of all others to be intrusted with the founding of a mission which meant the founding of a State. To this evident call of providence Lee joyfully responded, and at the head of a little company of woodsmen he started across the continent, taking the route followed by the American Fur Trading Company; the whole summer of 1834 being occupied in their journey to the Columbia River. On his arrival in the region of The Dalles of the Columbia Lee selected a location for his mission on the Willamette River, about twelve miles below the present city of Salem.

In 1838 he returned overland to New York, bringing with him the tidings of the success of the Gospel among the Indians, and seeking for reinforcements for the new and rapidly-extending field. After a year spent in delivering addresses in the chief eastern cities, he succeeded in organizing the largest missionary expedition that ever sailed from an American port, which body of ministers and emigrants left New York in 1839, and landed in Oregon in June, 1840, having made the voyage by way of Cape Horn.

At this time the northern section of Oregon, as far south as the Columbia River, was claimed as British territory by that powerful corporation, the Hudson's Bay Company; and it is due to the early Methodist settlers in that country to record, that through their representations to the American Government of the proper geography of that region this immense territory was saved to the United States.



Although Lee, the four Hines brothers, and other sturdy pioneer preachers went out to labor among the Indians, their success among them was the least of their achievements. In 1839 immigrants began to pour into this magnificent valley, and nine years afterward Oregon was organized into a Territory. During this year the General Conference authorized the establishment of the Oregon and California Mission Conference, the Rev. William Roberts, of the Philadelphia Conference, being appointed as Missionary Superintendent, with a field comprising the entire Protestant civilization between the Sierras and the Pacific Ocean. In 1835 "The Pacific Christian Advocate" was founded in Portland, Oregon, and the Rev. T. H. Pearne, who had been sent out as an assistant to Roberts on his great circuit, was elected its first Editor. "The names of Roberts and Pearne," says Bishop Peck, "will ever remain among the great men of the Pacific Coast. They were stalwart, powerful, pushing men, whose enterprise and sagacity secured to Methodism and to civilization a country in which there are now five flourishing Methodist Conferences, and out of which has been organized three great States of the Union."

For four years Roberts ranged from the Columbia River to the Golden Gate, having, previous to his appointment, by direction of the Missionary Board, in 1846, explored what was then the territory of Upper California, and organized the first Methodist Church in what was then the little half-Spanish city of San Francisco. In 1852 this region was divided, and the Oregon Conference was organized by Bishop Ames, who visited that country in 1853, and reported a membership of 921, with 27 traveling and 35 local preachers. Roberts remained with the Oregon Conference, serving as Presiding Elder of the Portland District and in other important positions until 1877, when he was placed upon the superannuated list; thus closing forty-two years of effective labor, whose fruits the Church and the nation richly enjoy.

The Rev. James H. Wilbur, known among the Indians in Oregon and Washington Territories as "Father Wilbur," was appointed to this field in 1847. In 1853 he was made Superintendent of the work in southern Oregon, and in 1861 he was appointed to the Indian Reserve in the Yakima district, where he has since lived and labored.



Father Wilbur has identified himself with the true interests of the red men, who have boundless faith in him; and this is doubtless one of the great reasons for the prosperity of his mission, which has now about four hundred members, with several native Indian preachers. His work is regarded as a wonderful success.

The Willamette University, at Salem, Oregon, is the successor of a little mission and manual labor school established in 1834 by Jason and Daniel Lee. These men, foreseeing the growth and requirements of the Church, secured large tracts of land in the Willamette Valley, on which the city of Salem was afterward built, from the proceeds whereof it was hoped that large educational endowments would be realized. After various changes of location and ownership the school building was sold by the Missionary Superintendent, Rev. Mr. Gary, in 1842, to the trustees of the Oregon Institute, by whom it was, in 1853, incorporated as Willamette University, under the patronage of the Oregon Conference.

The new building represented at the opening of this chapter was erected in 1867. It stands in the heart of the city of Salem, the capital of the State of Oregon, near the State capitol building; and from its dome may be seen a vast extent of country, with the snow-clad peaks of Mts. Hood, Thomas, Jefferson, and St. Helens piercing the distant horizon. Its president is the Rev. Thomas M. Gatch, Ph.D., an *alumnus* of the Ohio Wesleyan University, and a gentleman of large experience as an instructor, he having been Professor of Mathematics and Natural Sciences in the University of the Pacific in California from 1855 to 1858, and being now in the fourteenth year of his presidency of the Willamette University. Dr. Gatch is a member of the State Board of Examination, and in 1877 was Mayor of the city of Salem.

**California.**—The five conferences formed from the territory pre-empted by Lee and his brethren are, the Oregon, Columbia River, California, Southern California, and Nevada Conferences; whose genesis would form a volume of surpassing power and interest. No attempt will here be made to write a history of the stirring events in the midst of which, under the leadership of that great-hearted Pauline missionary, William Taylor, ("California Taylor," as he is called at the East, to distinguish him from the Boston sailor preacher,) the Method-



ist Episcopal Church became so great a power for good in the city of San Francisco and the region round about. Some day the Pacific Coast will have its own historian. May his genius and inspiration be equal to his theme!

About the time of the discovery of gold in California, in 1849, the Rev. Isaac Owen, of the Indiana Conference, and the Rev. William Taylor, of the Baltimore Conference, were appointed missionaries to California; the former settled at Sacramento, and the latter at San Francisco. They were presently followed by Rev. S. D. Symonds, of the Michigan; Edward Bannister, of the Genesee; and M. C. Briggs, of Erie Conference, and others. It was a glorious opportunity for men who were equal to it; weak men would have gone down out of sight at once and forever in these surging rapids. From the present stand-point it appears that God selected these pioneers himself, and he makes no mistakes.

They were men fit to found states and empires; men who could stand steady in the wildest torrents of speculation, holding their faith and their mission of more value than all the gold in the *placers* and gulches. They thundered the Law and shouted the Gospel into the ears of the hurrying crowds on street corners; invaded the gambling hells, and preached Jesus and the resurrection to gangs of half-crazed cut-throats and adventurers; set up a Christian newspaper, "The California Christian Advocate," and made it the organ of liberty, education, righteousness, and orthodoxy; hunted barbarism out of its gaudy palaces, and drove it into dens and caves; and fairly wrenched the mastery of those golden shores from the grasp of libertinism and atheism, and gave it over to the hands of men whose consciences they had at last succeeded in waking up.

"To Methodism," says Bishop Peek, "belongs the honor of saving the State of California to freedom. Until recently it was equal there to all the other Protestant denominations put together." "The style of the people," he continues, "enters into the history of the Church. California is an exhilarating country. Its people are free, chivalrous, the opposite of all hypocrisy." If a man were wicked he did not deny it—that would be mean.

When these men became Christians, they brought these same characteristics into the Church with them. They expected to pay their



way at Church as much as at a theater. Our "‘Penny Collections’ at the old Powell-street Church used to amount to forty or fifty dollars a Sunday, all in silver and gold."

It was in 1860 that the Board of Bishops requested Dr. Jesse T. Peck (now Bishop Peck) to go out to California, and for eight years he served the Church as pastor and Presiding Elder. The Howard-street Methodist Episcopal Church was one of his enterprises, and the University of the Pacific at Santa Clara, now under the presidency of Rev. A. S. Gibbons, A.M., M.D., shared the benefit of his hopefulness and sagacity.

Later came Rev. Nathan R. Peck, from the Black River Conference, who was Presiding Elder of the Washoe District when it composed what is now the whole State of Nevada and a large part of Eastern California. The Nevada Conference was explored and projected chiefly by his labors.

California Methodism has its martyr minister in the Rev. Eliezer Thomas, one of the many victims of that iniquitous Indian Bureau, in whose service as special Commissioner to the Modocs he was murdered by "Boston Charlie."

Of the present incumbents in the General Conference offices on the Pacific Coast, further account will be given under the head of "The Staff of Methodism."

The Columbia River Conference is a limb from the Oregon Conference. It is a country of magnificent distances, of vast prairies, well wooded and watered; a grazing, wheat-growing country, sparsely settled as yet, through which the Methodist itinerants travel in wagons, in which they live, thus improving somewhat on the "saddle-bags' men" of the earlier time. It is a glorious land, a hopeful field of labor, and affording experiences to amply demonstrate that the heroic days of Methodism have not yet passed away.



HOWARD-STREET M. E. CHURCH,  
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.



**Methodism in Mormondom.**—On Sunday the 15th of May, 1870, the Methodist Episcopal Church held its first service in the Mormon capital. On that day the Rev. Gustavus M. Pierce, of the Central New York Conference, under appointment from Bishop Ames as Superintendent of Missions for Utah, opened his commission at Independence Hall, Salt Lake City, being assisted by the Rev. Dr. Robert M. Hatfield and the Rev. Dr. Charles H. Fowler, who were at that time pastors in the city of Chicago, and who stopped, on their way to the Pacific Coast, to witness the planting of this notable vine. An unfinished hayloft over a livery stable in a stone building, thirty



METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SALT LAKE CITY.

feet by a hundred, known as Faust's Hall, was presently engaged for a year as a place of meeting, at a rental of six hundred dollars, and here public worship, the Sabbath-school, class-meetings, and other Methodist services were held until the basement rooms of the new church building were ready for occupancy in December, 1871.

The Rev. Mr. Pierce was sent out not only to occupy this central point of Utah Territory, but also to explore and establish a district over which he should be the Presiding Elder, and which it was his privilege and duty to make as long and wide as possible. About a month after the commencement of the Salt Lake City Mission, he



opened another at Corinne, at which place a church was dedicated by Chaplain M'Cabe on the 20th of September, 1870, being the first church dedication in Utah. At Ogden—the point of junction of the two great railroads which had recently been completed across the continent—the passenger depot was used for the first Methodist assembly, and on the 29th of September, 1871, the Society entered upon the occupancy of property bought for that purpose. In October of 1871 Pierce added another appointment to his circuit at a place called Evanston, in honor of that distinguished Methodist, Governor Evans, of Colorado, where, in the following summer, a church was erected at a cost of about two thousand dollars. These three churches, and the rent of hall, were paid for in part by liberal donations from the Church Extension Society.

The coming of the Methodist Episcopal Church was hailed with delight by the territorial authorities of Utah and the few "Gentiles" who had settled there. Its traditions had already prepared its way in the minds of these first settlers, and one of the apostate Mormons, on meeting the Methodist missionary, said to him, "I have heard much of the Methodist Church, and have been surprised that it has passed by Utah so long."

On the other hand, the Mormon authorities looked upon these missionaries with unspeakable displeasure then; but the days were over when "Danites" and "Destroying Angels" could murder their neighbors with safety. The reign of law, as well as of Gospel missions, had begun. A Mormon editor of Salt Lake said to Colonel Morrow, then Commandant at the United States post near Salt Lake City: "We Mormons can fight your soldiers; we are not afraid of you; but these Methodists, with their network of circuits, we are afraid of. If they can reach and influence our people, they are the most dreaded by us of any of our foes." The Mormon apostle, Brigham Young, after pretending to despise the Methodists, and saying, "They can tell all they know about religion in five minutes," at length changed his mode of speech, and said to one of them, "You Methodist preachers and people are doing more to injure us through your papers, and in your pulpits at Washington and elsewhere, than all else. We shall fight you to the bitter end." The Methodists had now furnished the first essential requisite to the converts from Mormonism; namely, a Chris-



tian church and school, in which to bring up their children. So long as apostate Mormons were transformed from Latter-Day Saints into outbreking sinners or blatant infidels, Young and his elders were not alarmed; but now that their people were in danger of being translated from Mormons into Methodists, they began to bestir themselves to prevent, as far as possible, the progress of this new enterprise. Among the early reinforcements of the Utah work were the Revs. W. C. Damon, of the California Conference; James B. Seymour, of the



THE LATE PETER CARTWRIGHT, D.D.,  
Of the Illinois Conference.

Illinois Conference; J. M. Jameson, of the Ohio Conference; and W. Carver, of the Minnesota Conference, who, for a considerable length of time, carried on the work amid great hardships and danger. Nevertheless, under the blessing of God, the labors of the heroic missionaries, and their not less heroic wives, resulted in the establishment, in 1872, of the Rocky Mountain Conference, which included the Territories of Utah, Idaho, Montana, and a part of Wyoming. This vast mountain region was afterward divided into the Utah and Montana



Conferences. The statistics of the Utah Conference at this date showed nine traveling preachers, two local preachers, 155 members, 725 Sunday-school scholars, nine churches valued at \$70,000, and three parsonages valued at \$3,500. There was also one Methodist school within its limits, the Rocky Mountain Seminary, whose principal was the Rev. J. M'Eldowny, D.D., a native of Ireland, a convert in the Wesleyan Connection of America, in which he served as professor and president of Adrian College, Mich., and from which he



THE LATE HENRY SLICER, D.D.,  
Of the Baltimore Conference.

was received into the Methodist Episcopal Church and assigned to the charge of the Rocky Mountain Seminary in 1877.

The elegant structure erected by the Methodists in Salt Lake City, by unforeseen circumstances was left as a hopeless burden on the Society, and in view of its importance to the denomination, and its untold value as an outpost along the line of Christ's kingdom, the Rev. Dr. C. C. McCabe, (or as he is more familiarly known, "Chaplain McCabe,") the efficient Assistant Secretary of the Church Extension Society, per-



sonally assumed the debt thereon, to the amount of twenty thousand dollars; which sum, in addition to his regular work in that direction, has now been raised, thus giving Methodism a well-appointed fort to be held in this enemy's country till the Lord himself shall come.

The closing period of this history, embracing the last quarter of a century, though crowded with great characters and events, is not yet properly distanced for historic review. During this period nine bishops of the Church have died, and numbers of other names, long familiar to the Church, have been placed upon the marble which marks their honored graves. The scholarly M'Clintock, cut down in his prime; that sturdy Illinois veteran, Peter Cartwright, over whose early victories the Church has shouted, and over whose later vagaries it has laughed; Thomas M. Eddy, whose ever youthful heart forbade his growing old; Father Slicer, of Baltimore, whose strong face and massive form were so long familiar in the General Conferences of the Church; Dr. Monroe, the first Secretary of the Church Extension Society, suddenly called from a brilliant career; these and others, whom future writers will duly estimate and honor, have passed out of sight of half-blind mortal eyes. In less conspicuous places uncounted thousands of brave men and holy women have been doing good service for the Master in this particular branch of his Church; and to almost every reader under whose eyes these pages may come, there will recur the name and fame of some right royal soul quite as worthy of place in this volume as many which there appear. So let it be! Memory is better than history. There hath been no godly life lived among men but hath its record in loving, grateful hearts; a record more lasting than that made with ink and paper. So then, in the ultimate history, all right speaking and all well doing, however little heard or seen by men, will have its proper place: and in those pages all truly honorable names will duly appear; some that were last, perchance, exchanging place with the first.

**Bishop Hamline.**—Leonidas L. Hamline, the first of the two Bishops elected by the General Conference of 1844, was born in Burlington, Connecticut, May 10, 1797. In 1833 he was received on trial in the Ohio Conference, and stationed at Wesley Chapel, Cincinnati, from which pastorate he was appointed, in 1836, Assistant Editor of the "Western Christian Advocate." In 1841, the "Ladies' Reposi-



tory" was established at Cincinnati, and Hamline served as its Editor until his election as Bishop in 1844. After eight years of service in the Episcopacy he resigned that office, removed to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, where he died on the 22d of February, 1865. A few months after his death, his devoted and accomplished widow removed to Evanston, Ill.,



BISHOP HAMLINE.

and the remains of her husband were removed to the beautiful Chicago cemetery at Rose Hill.

The residence of Mrs. Bishop Hamline has been for years one of the chief centers of that form of religious life called entire sanctifica-



tion. Large weekly assemblies of persons especially interested in this doctrine and experience have long been held in her home, and Mrs. Hamline is widely known and honored throughout the North-west as one of the elect ladies, whose teaching and example in the "higher life" have been the means of untold blessing to the Church.



BISHOP JAMES.

**Bishop James.**—Edmund Storer James, D.D., LL.D., one of the most sagacious and statesmanlike men which America has ever produced, has but recently departed this life. His biography is in course of preparation, but has not yet appeared.



Bishop Janes was born in Sheffield, Berkshire County, Mass., April 20, 1807. He united with the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1820, and for ten years engaged in teaching, during which time he prepared himself for the profession of the law; but in 1830, his mind having been turned to the ministry, he was received into the Philadelphia Conference, and in 1844 was elected, with Bishop Hamline, to the Episcopal office. His long period of service as senior Bishop devolved upon him many and great responsibilities, but his power always seemed to enlarge with every added demand upon it. His death occurred on the 18th of September, 1876, at his residence in New York, after a brief illness. His friend and contemporary, Bishop Simpson, in his "Encyclopedia of Methodism, pays this high tribute to his memory:—

"Bishop Janes was one of the most remarkable men in the history of American Methodism, with no superior and few equals. He possessed a mind of a high order, capable of the broadest discernment, and of the most subtle analysis. He was a model platform speaker, ready, earnest, and comprehensive, and a preacher of rare power and grasping eloquence. As an executive officer he especially excelled, presiding with great skill and dignity, and attending diligently to all the details of his office. He was a man of inflexible principle, thorough, conscientious, and untiring in labor and devotion. He had a heart of overflowing sympathy for any who were in distress, and endeared himself to many an afflicted preacher by the kindness of his manner. One has well said, he was as practical as James, as cautious as Peter, as tender and loving as John, as many-sided and comprehensive as Paul."

**Bishop Baker.**—Osmon C. Baker, D.D., one of the four bishops elected at the General Conference of 1852, and the first of their number to go up higher, was a native of New Hampshire. He was born in the town of Marlow, July 30, 1812. At the age of fifteen he entered the Wesleyan Academy at Wilbraham, Mass., where he was converted, and received into the Church by that prince of educators, Dr. Wilbur Fisk. In 1830 he entered the Wesleyan University in Middletown, from which he removed, after three years, by reason of ill health. In 1839 he was admitted on trial into the New Hampshire Conference, and thereafter served the Church as a



teacher and author until his election to the Episcopate, along with Bishops Scott, Simpson, and Ames, in 1852. For fourteen years he rendered good service in this highest office in the Church, after which he became an invalid, and lingered until his death, which occurred on the 20th of December, 1871, at Concord, New Hampshire, in the 59th year of his age.



BISHOP BAKER.

Bishop Baker is remembered as a calm, polished, Christian scholar. His administration as bishop was distinguished by a clear comprehension of the duties of his office. His "Guide-book in the Administra-



tion of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church" remains as a monument to his name and work.

**Bishop Ames.**—The effort to put a man of the size and style of Bishop Ames into a book, is a difficult, if not a hopeless, task. There is so much of him, in so many different directions, that one who knew and loved him finds himself discouraged at every step. Perhaps no better thing has been said in few words in honor of his memory than this sentence with which the Rev. Dr. Fowler concludes a tribute to his memory in the editorial columns of "The Christian Advocate:" "Bishop Ames was truly a great man, and the Church will be lonesome without him."

Edward Raymond Ames was of good old Puritan stock. His grandfather, the Rev. Sylvanus Ames, was a Massachusetts man, a graduate of Harvard College, and a pastor at Taunton, Mass. During the war of the Revolution he was a chaplain in Washington's army, and died in camp at Valley Forge in that terrible winter of 1778-79. His son, the father of the Bishop, settled at Amesville, Ohio, where Edward Raymond Ames was born on the 20th of May, 1806. During his student life at the University of Ohio he experienced the grace of God, and was received into the Methodist Episcopal Church. Among his associates at that time may be mentioned the distinguished names of Rev. H. J. Clark, Rev. J. M. Tremble, Rev. E. H. Pilcher, E. W. Schon, and other young men, who afterward obtained distinction in the Church. In 1830 he was licensed to preach by that remarkable man Peter Cartwright, and during the same year he was received on trial by the Illinois Conference. In 1832, on the division of this Conference, he was assigned to that portion of it which was designated the Indiana Conference, as a member of which he was ordained deacon by Bishop Soule, and elder by Bishop Roberts. In 1840 he was chosen a delegate to the General Conference held in Baltimore, and was elected Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society, holding also the position of Superintendent of the German and Indian Missions of the Church, in which capacity he traveled over twenty-four thousand miles during the four years of his secretaryship, traversing the whole Indian Territory from Texas to Lake Superior, and camping out in the wilderness for weeks at a time. During his life among the various Indian tribes he learned to speak the Choctaw



language. He was absolutely without fear, and traveled among friendly and hostile Indians, often alone, most of the time with only a single companion. He was the first chaplain ever elected by an Indian council, in which capacity he served in the Choctaw General Council of 1842, where, at their request, he drew up the School Law of the Choctaw Nation, a noble bill, by the provision of which a larger sum was appropriated for education, *per capita*, than in any State of the Union. The confidence reposed in him, and in his knowledge of Indian character, was often shown during the presidencies of Lincoln and Grant, by whom he was often solicited to serve on Indian Commissions, but which honor, from press of other duties, he was obliged to decline.

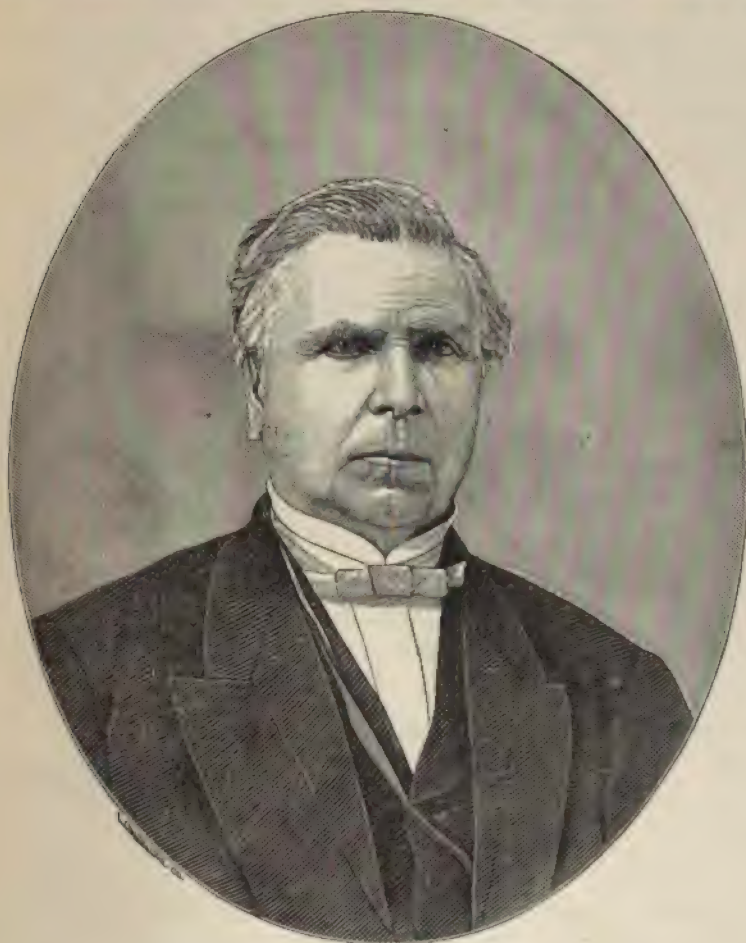
In 1844 he was again elected delegate to the General Conference, and thence, until 1852, he traveled as Presiding Elder on the New Albany, Indianapolis, and Jeffersonville Districts in the Indiana Conference. His election to the Episcopate, in 1852, after the election of another man from the same State, (Bishop Simpson,) shows how high was the appreciation in which he was held, no other instance being on record of the election of two Bishops at one time from the same State or Conference. During the War of the Rebellion Bishop Ames was the intimate friend of President Lincoln and of the late Gov. Morton, of Indiana, and was often the bearer of private communications between the two. For thirteen years after his election as Bishop he resided in Indiana, but in 1865 he removed to the city of Baltimore, which was his place of residence until his death, which occurred on the 25th of April, 1879, in the seventy-third year of his age.

As a preacher Bishop Ames was capable of wonderful eloquence, which was only occasionally manifested ; but sometimes with some simple narration, some tender little story, told with all the pathos of his great nature, he would melt a congregation to tears ; or in some grand statement of doctrine or duty he would stir the blood of a Conference until the "amens" became so loud that he would be obliged to pause for silence. There was a broad, deep vein of humor in him ; his smile was sunshine ; his commendation was a power and blessing to those who received it, and his rebuke had so much of the terrible in it that few ventured to incur it a second time. He was the prince of administrators ; in personal appearance, dignified and imposing ; in bearing,



majestic. While presiding at a Conference his words went always straight to the heart of the subject; his decision was prompt and final.

At one time in his life he was called upon to choose between the office of Presiding Elder on an Indiana District and that of a Senator of the United States. But God had called him to the ministry, and



BISHOP AMES.

men only called him into politics, and on this basis he settled the question once for all. Nevertheless he was as a statesman born. He seemed always ready for an emergency, possessing the courage to face all difficulty, and the key to unlock almost all success. He abounded



in practical sense. As Missionary Secretary, from 1840 to 1844, he instituted and put in good working order the plan afterward enlarged and worked by Dr. Durbin, and which now has taken definite form in the Discipline of the Church.

When the Rebellion broke out he was prepared for it. Dr. Fowler says of him: "His familiarity with the South, acquired by traveling over it in the order of his work, and his close observations of the topography, productions, highways, streams, towns, and cities of that region, made him of great service to the Government in ordering their campaigns. He was more than once closeted with President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton in planning for the suppression of the Rebellion, and more than once he was closeted with Stanton in prayer during the dark days." Among the memorable conferences at which he presided was the session of the Rock River Conference, in 1871, at Aurora, while the smoke of the great conflagration at Chicago was still darkening the sky. In this great crisis, when so large a portion of that stronghold of Methodism lay in embers and ashes, and the interests of the Church in that city were in peril, Bishop Ames, by his calmness, sagacity, and boundless hope, guided, encouraged, and inspirited the anxious men who looked into each other's eyes for sympathy, and up to God for help in this great calamity. When doubts were raised as to whether the city could possibly be rebuilt, or whether it would lie for long years in its ashes, Bishop Ames immediately replied: "The railroads could afford to rebuild Chicago rather than it should not be done"—a business opinion which showed the breadth of his understanding and his grasp of practical affairs.

His funeral, which was attended by many representative men of the Church, as well as by a great concourse of the citizens of Baltimore, among whom he was greatly honored and beloved, took place from his late residence, No. 184 M'Cullough-street, Baltimore, being, by his special direction, particularly plain and simple in all its details.

**Francis Burns**, the Methodist Bishop of Liberia, was a native of Albany, N. Y. At fifteen years of age he was converted, and at seventeen felt that God called him to preach the Gospel. In 1834 he accompanied the Rev. John Seys to Liberia, as a missionary teacher in Monrovia Seminary. In 1849 he was appointed Presiding Elder of



the Cape Palmas District, and was the favorite presiding officer of the African Conference. In 1856 the General Conference made provision for the election and consecration of a Bishop for the African work, and two years afterward the Liberia Annual Conference elected Mr. Burns to that office, and sent him to America for ordination, which



BISHOP BURNS.

was performed at the Genesee Conference, October 14, 1858, the services being conducted by Bishops Janes and Baker. Although a full-blooded African the Cape fever was too much even for him, and after four years' episcopal service, his health becoming impaired, he was di-



rected to take a sea voyage, and accordingly set sail for America, but he died at sea on the 18th of April, 1863, within three days' sail of Baltimore.

He is described as a gentlemanly person, of an intelligent and cultivated mind, a ready and even eloquent speaker, and "in all respects a model African."

**Bishop Roberts.**—John Wright Roberts, the late Missionary Bishop for Africa, was born at Petersburg, Va. At an early age he



REV. JOHN WRIGHT ROBERTS, BISHOP OF LIBERIA.

was converted, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, after which he emigrated to the Colony of Liberia. In 1841 he was elected to elders' orders by the Liberia Conference, and came to America the same year to be ordained. Twenty-five years afterward he was elected to the office of Missionary Bishop by the General Conference of 1866, and was consecrated in St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, New York, on the 20th of June, 1866. Without delay he set sail for Liberia, where he diligently and judiciously performed the duties of



his office until his death, which occurred on the 30th of January, 1875. The vacancy caused by his death has never been filled; the African Mission, as well as those in Asia and Europe, being now regarded as integral parts of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and their Conferences, like others, are presided over by Bishops of the regular staff, who from time to time are designated to visit this distant field.

**Bishop Clark.**—Three men were elevated to the Episcopacy by the General Conference of 1864, all of whom within six years thereafter passed to their reward. The first of these was Davis W. Clark.\*

His first fame in the Church was as the successful editor of the "Ladies' Repository," at Cincinnati, which periodical, under his management, became the acknowledged "queen of the monthlies." It would appear that the editorship of this journal was for a time regarded as an excellent training school for the bishopric, several of its editors having been promoted to the Episcopal Chair.

Bishop Clark was a New England man, born on the Island of Mt. Desert, off the coast of Maine, February 25, 1812. On this bleak, storm-swept islet he passed his childhood and youth, and united with the little Methodist Episcopal Church while yet a boy. Like most of the other lads born in the arms of the ocean, he early manifested fondness for sea-faring life, but his conversion changed the line of his ambition, and instead of climbing to the captaincy of some fishing smack or coasting schooner, he began to look forward to the Christian ministry. In the spring of 1831 young Clark—then about nineteen years of age—left home for Readfield, the seat of the Maine Wesleyan Seminary, which was at that time a manual labor school, where he began to revolve in his mind the idea of a collegiate education. It was a discouraging prospect, since he was without money, and his parents and friends were very much in the same condition. But he made up in labor and faith what he lacked in other respects, and by studying twelve or fourteen hours a day, with two or three hours of manual labor thrown in, he was not long in preparing himself to enter college. He speaks of these experiences as "climbing the hill of science bare-foot," which was, doubtless, as rough a journey in its way as many of those tours of exploration in the wilderness which require so much courage and muscle on the part of the backwoods itinerants.

\* "Life Story," by Daniel Curry, D.D.



In 1833 he entered the Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Connecticut—the first collegiate institution established by the Methodists in the East—and in two years finished the entire four years' course, graduating in 1836, this being the fourth class sent out by this new college. His fine mental and physical endowments carried him safely



BISHOP CLARK.

through this tremendous strain, and he graduated with honors, after which he devoted himself to teaching at the Amenia Seminary, N. Y., first as tutor in mathematics, and for the last five of the seven years as principal of the seminary, and instructor in English Literature and



in Mental and Moral Philosophy, during which time he prepared a volume entitled "Mental Discipline," which was afterward published at the Methodist Book Room in 1847.

His work as a teacher was, however, only a stepping-stone to the gospel ministry. In 1846 he closed his successful administration at Amenia, and was received into the New York Annual Conference, which commenced its session for that year on the 17th of May, in the city of New York, and was appointed to Winsted, Conn. He had already distinguished himself as a contributor to the "Christian Advocate," and the "Quarterly Review," and after filling five appointments—the most of which were in New York City—as preacher in charge, in which, among other things, he distinguished himself by his strong antislavery sentiments and sermons, and gained the title of abolitionist—which was then one of the worst names a good man could carry—he was, in 1852, invited from his pastorate at Poughkeepsie to Cincinnati, to become the editor of the "Ladies' Repository" in place of Professor W. C. Larrabee, who had resigned this position to become Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Indiana.

His success as an editor was so distinguished that the General Conference continued him at his post, till, in 1864, he was honored with the highest office in its gift, from which position, after a faithful service of seven years, he was further promoted by the Great Head of the Church himself.

In 1851 the Wesleyan University conferred upon him the title of Doctor of Divinity, he being the first *alumnus* which the institution thus honored. As a writer he was clear and forcible; as an educator and pastor he was faithful and successful. As an antislavery reformer he was bold and progressive, yet not more zealous than wise. The best part of his life-work was accomplished before his election to the Episcopacy. After some years of failing health and strength he died at his home, in Cincinnati, in what, but for his intense mental application, would have been the full prime of his life, he being then fifty-nine years of age. He died May 23, 1871.

**Bishop Thomson.**—The Rev. Edward Thomson was born at Portsea, England, October, 1810, and immigrated to America in 1819. Dr. Punshon, in the eloquent tribute to his memory pronounced



before the Brooklyn General Conference of 1872 styled him the "Chrysostom of America."

A character more perfect than that of Bishop Thomson it would be difficult to imagine. There were, doubtless, weak places in him, since he was a mortal man, but neither his pupils, his parishioners, his



BISHOP THOMSON.

readers, nor his subordinates in the ministry seem to have been able to discover them. It has been said of him that in the fullness of his powers he was able to enter a college recitation room, in any department, and conduct the recitation off-hand, in such a manner that



the class would regard his presence as a high privilege and pleasure. When only nineteen years of age he received a diploma as Doctor of Medicine from the University of Pennsylvania, but rather more than a year afterward, in 1831, he renounced the world, gave himself to the Lord and the Church, and was admitted into the Ohio Conference in 1832, having then just reached his majority.

From 1838 to 1843 he had charge of Norwalk Seminary, which was then under the charge of the North Ohio Conference, and after filling appointments at Norwalk, Cincinnati, Detroit, and other prominent stations, in 1844 he was made editor of the "Ladies' Repository," and two years afterward was honored with an election to the Presidency of the Ohio Wesleyan University, which position he filled and adorned for fourteen years. In 1860 Dr. Thomson was elected to the chief editorial chair of the "Christian Advocate," at New York, and in 1864 was elected to the office of Bishop. His early death was one of the greatest losses the Methodist Episcopal Church ever suffered in the removal of any one of its officers and servants. Four years was too short a time for this quiet, gentle, saintly nature to impress himself upon the whole of Methodism; but at the North-west, where he lived and died, his name is as ointment poured forth, and heaven is made richer and earth poorer by his transference from labor to glory.

In the class-room he was an admirable instructor; in the pastorate, he seemed to be in his divinely-appointed element, not only pointing to his flock the way to holiness and heaven, but joyfully and lovingly going before them therein. He possessed a literary genius of a high order, and his volume of theological lectures entitled, "Evidences of Revealed Religion," is one of the richest treasures in the literature of the Church. But over and above his social and mental powers and excellences was that manifest indwelling of the Holy Ghost which gloriously characterized his public ministry and his private life. He was, perhaps, more nearly a repetition of the saintly Fletcher of Madeley, than any other man which Methodism has produced. His sermons, though not in the manner of the fire or the tempest, were melting and powerful.

Bishop Thomson made the first Episcopal visit to India, of which he gave an account after his return in two admirable volumes, and



not long after, on the 22d of March, 1870, he died of pneumonia, in the City of Wheeling, West Virginia, in the 60th year of his age.

**Bishop Kingsley.**—Calvin Kingsley was a native of the State of New York. He was born in Annsville, September 8, 1812, and was converted at the age of fourteen, in a revival in Chautauqua



BISHOP KINGSLEY.

County in western New York, to which place his family had removed. At the age of twenty-four, having pursued his preparatory studies by himself, he entered Alleghany College, where his proficiency was such that in his sophomore year he was appointed tutor in mathematics.



After his graduation in 1841, he continued his scholastic duties, to which, however, he added the labor of preaching the Gospel on circuits and stations within reach of his college. He was received on trial by the Erie Conference in 1841, and in 1856 he was elected editor of "The Western Christian Advocate," which post he filled with honor and success. In the General Conference of 1860 he was a recognized leader, and his report as chairman of the Committee on Slavery is one of the great historic documents upon that subject. He was a member of the General Conference of 1864—his fourth term of such service—at which he was elected and consecrated as one of the four Bishops then chosen.

The missions of the Church having become numerous and widespread, it was necessary that they should now receive personal Episcopal attention and Bishop Kingsley was chosen for this important service.

In 1869, after holding the Conference on the Pacific coast, he set sail for China and India, expecting to return by way of Europe. He arrived in Cairo, in Egypt, on the 1st of March, 1870, where he determined to gratify a long-cherished wish of visiting the Holy Land. After a brief stay among the sacred places once glorified by the presence of the Son of God he made his way to Beyroot, and engaged his passage for Constantinople; but on the morning of the 6th of April, the day appointed for his departure, having ascended to the house-top to enjoy one more look at the sun-clad heights of Lebanon, he was seized with a pain in the left breast, and in a few minutes fell dead upon the floor. A post-mortem examination showed that he had died of disease of the heart.



BISHOP KINGSLEY'S MONUMENT.

His traveling companions, the Rev. Dr. Bannister, of the Garrett Biblical Institute, and Miss Frances E. Willard, performed the last



sad offices of love and respect for their fallen leader and friend, and laid him to sleep in the little Protestant Mission cemetery at Beyroot in Syria, where subsequently his friends in America caused a modest shaft to be erected to mark his grave.

He was the youngest member of the Board of Bishops, and from his strong health and brave heart great things were expected of him, and doubtless great power and blessing has come to the Church, not in spite of, but because of, his death on Asiatic soil. It has been said, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," and the grave of Kingsley, who sleeps by the shore of the Mediterranean, is one of the sacred places and memories of the Church whose track in the American wilderness and through the wilder regions of Asia and Africa is marked by so many weary, but persistent, footsteps, and so many honorable sufferers.

"The heathen hold him as a hostage till we come."

**Lay Delegation.**—The only essential change in the Constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church since its organization in 1784 was the admission of lay delegates to the General Conference, such delegates appearing for the first time at the Brooklyn General Conference of 1872. Ever since the days of O'Kelly, and more especially after the secession which formed the Methodist Protestant Church in 1828, and that which became the Wesleyan Methodist Connection in 1843, the fact that the ecclesiastical affairs of the great Methodist body were wholly managed by the clergy was a subject of more or less agitation; not, however, because of any actual abuse of power on their part, but because it was feared there might sometime be such an abuse. In 1860, a newspaper called "The Methodist," was founded in the interest of Lay Delegation, of which Rev. Dr. George R. Crooks was the first editor, whose persistent advocacy of that measure for nearly twelve years was one of the chief reasons for its ultimate success. In 1868 the General Conference submitted to the entire membership of the Church a plan for the admission of laymen to their body which was approved by the very small vote of 100,000 for and 50,000 against, showing how very far from universal was the interest in this much-debated question. More than three fourths of the ministry voted for the measure, and thus the change was at length effected, admitting two



laymen from each Annual Conference to seats in the General Conference as co-ordinate members, with the right of voting as a separate house upon the demand therefor of two thirds of their own number.

The working of this system thus far leaves no room to doubt its wisdom.

**The Centennial of American Methodism.**—The month of October, 1866, was celebrated throughout the Methodist Episcopal Church as the one hundredth anniversary of American Methodism. The first Sunday of the year was specially appointed to be observed as a day of thanksgiving, praise, and prayer; and throughout the entire year memorial meetings, centennial celebrations, and every



HECK HALL. GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE, EVANSTON, ILL.

The tower rising above the oaks in the distance is the stately main building of the North-western University, now under the presidency of Oliver Marcy, LL.D.

species of appropriate services were held, at the most, if not all, of which there were thank-offerings in the form of contributions to general or local Church enterprises. It was a time for paying Church debts, raising college endowments, erecting and establishing new churches, schools, etc., notable among which was Heck Hall, for the use of the Garrett Biblical Institute, at Evanston, Ill.; the theological institution founded by the liberality of Mrs. Eliza (Clark) Garrett, of Chicago; Drew Theological Seminary, at Madison, N. J., the gift of the late Daniel Drew; the Centenary Biblical Institute, at Baltimore, for the training of colored men for the ministry; the Centenary Collegiate Institute, at Hackettstown, N. J.; the Centenary Church, Chi-



cago; and large numbers of smaller enterprises of like character all over the country, both North and South. An admirable volume by Dr. Abel Stevens was prepared by request of General Conference, showing the progress of Methodism during its first century, and a great financial, if not spiritual, advance was made throughout the Church. The Centenary Committee, appointed by the Bishops to have charge of the celebration, asked for an aggregate of two millions of dollars for general educational interests, but for the most part the liberality of the people turned in the direction of local Church interests: the entire centenary collections and subscriptions reaching the enormous amount in round numbers of *eight millions seven hundred thousand dollars*. The General Education Fund received about \$16,000. The Children's Fund, \$83,785 66. Besides the centenary contributions during this year, the Church raised for the usual benevolent objects, \$930,419.

**Centennial Statistics.**—The following statistics from Simpson's "Cyclopaedia of Methodism," indicate the growth of the denomination as well as of the bodies which had separated from it:—

"There were in 1866, as the product of a century's toil, 9 Bishops, 64 Annual Conferences, 7,576 itinerant and 8,602 local preachers; total members, 1,032,184; church edifices, 10,462, valued at \$29,594,004; parsonages, 3,314, valued at \$1,420,958; Sunday-schools, 14,045; scholars, 980,622; foreign missionaries, 222; members in foreign lands, 7,478; domestic missionaries, 303; having a membership of 26,075; 2 theological seminaries, 23 colleges, and 77 seminaries and female colleges; 77 instructors, 22,305 students; educational property valued at \$7,898,239; 2 Book Concerns in New York and Cincinnati, with 7 depositories in as many different cities. The capital stock of the Book Concern, \$1,213,327; official Church papers, 16; unofficial, 6; bound volumes of books issued by the Book Concern, 2,548; tracts of various sizes, 1,037."

**Other Methodist Bodies.**—There were 8 other Methodist bodies in the United States, and at the close of 1865 their statistics were as follows: Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 2,591 traveling and 4,904 local preachers; 708,949 members. Methodist Protestant Church, 810 traveling and 750 local preachers. This includes both North and South. African Methodist Episcopal Church, 513 traveling and 2,100 local preachers; 53,670 members. Evangelical Associa-



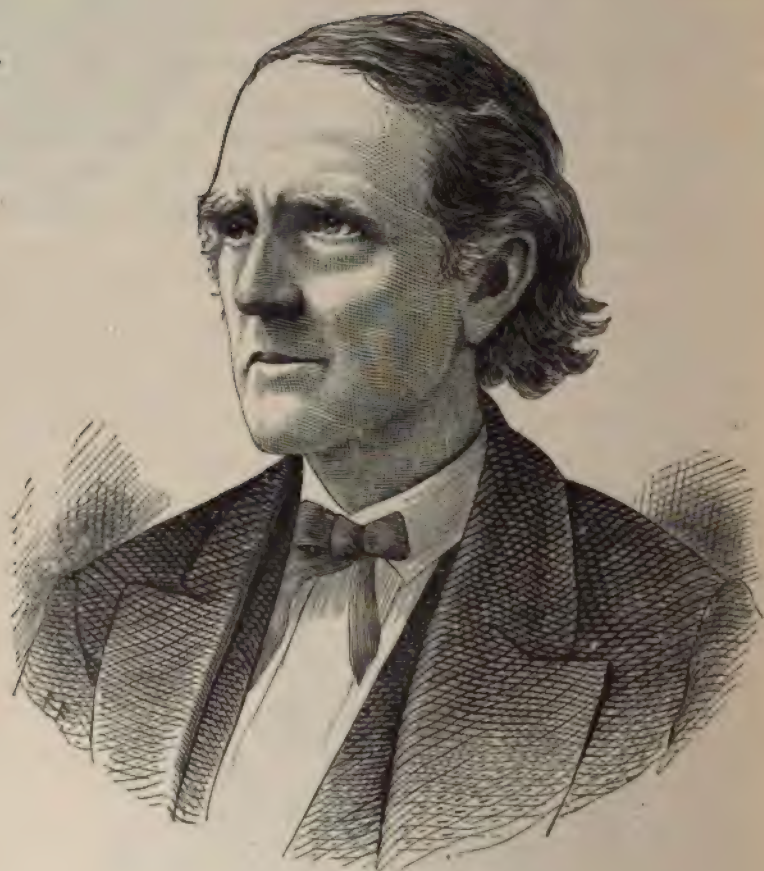
tion, 405 traveling and 323 local preachers; 5,185 members. Wesleyan Methodists, 236 traveling and 164 local preachers; 25,620 members. African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, 217 traveling and 444 local preachers; 5,600 members. Free Methodist Church, 67 traveling and 69 local preachers; 3,655 members. Primitive Methodist Church, 20 traveling and 34 local preachers; 1,905 members. Making a total outside of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 4,859 traveling and 8,788 local preachers, and 980,604 members."



REV. JOHN SUMMERFIELD.

Born at Preston, England, January 31, 1798. Came to America in March, 1821, entered the Troy Conference in June, 1822, and after three years of special service at missionary meetings, dedications, and other public occasions, where his marvelous eloquence attracted vast congregations, he sunk under the attack of pulmonary disease, and died June 13, 1825.





BISHOP SCOTT.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE STAFF OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

IT is an occasion of profound gratitude to God that he has conferred such manifest and manifold blessings upon the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the personal characters and official services of the men who have been called to the management of its connectional affairs. The following brief notice of the Bishops in active service, and of the present General Conference officers, may appropriately complete this outline of Methodist History :—



**Bishop Scott.**—Our senior Bishop, the venerable Levi Scott, D.D., whose term of office dates from 1852, was born October 11, 1802. Like most of his brethren of that day he entered the ministry without a regular collegiate education, but made such good use of his few opportunities for study that in 1840 he was made Principal of the Dickinson Grammar School at Carlisle, Pa., on the nomination of the Rev. Dr. Durbin, who was then President of Dickinson College—that historic school, (named in honor of its patron, Governor Dickinson, of Delaware,) in which so many eminent Methodists have studied, taught, and governed. In 1848 he was made Assistant Book Agent at New York, and four years later was elected and consecrated Bishop. His present residence is in his native town of Odessa, Delaware.

**Bishop Simpson.**—The name for many years the most widely known in our Church, is that of Matthew Simpson, D.D., LL.D., a man who, in the prime of his life, was the peerless orator of the American pulpit; and whose services, both to his Church and his country, will be held in grateful remembrance so long as either his Church or his country endures.

His election to the episcopate occurred in 1852, in the same class with Bishops Scott, Baker, and Ames, at which time he had become distinguished by his labors as President of Indiana Asbury University, which chair he filled from 1839 to 1848, and also by his four years' service thereafter as editor of the "Western Christian Advocate."

"How," asked the author of this volume, "did you gain your power as an orator?"

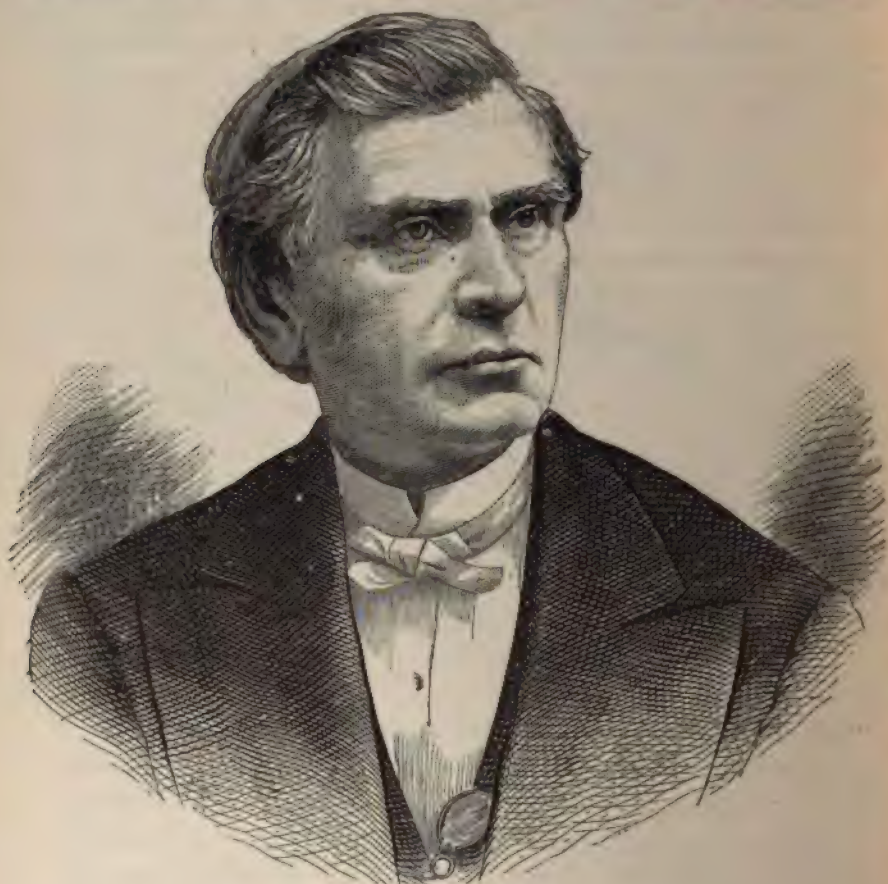
"By having one single purpose in view in every discourse, and giving myself wholly up to its accomplishment," was the Bishop's reply. "At school," he continued, "the one thing I could not do, was to speak. It cost me unspeakable effort to bring myself to attempt it, and I was invariably mortified by my failures. At length, having felt called to the ministry, I sought to forget myself as far as possible, and, banishing all thoughts of oratory, to give myself absolutely up to the task of saying things so that people could readily understand them. Then followed an increasing effort to impress the truth upon them, and by that means I have gained whatever power I possess as a public speaker."

This simple system of rhetoric, brought into use in dealing with



the great themes of revelation and the experience of the things of God, with the superadded baptism of the Holy Ghost, has made out of very unpromising material the very prince of American preachers.

A professor of oratory once went to hear Bishop Simpson as a professional study. Being afterward asked how he liked the preacher's



BISHOP SIMPSON.

elocution, he replied, "Elocution! I never thought of it. What does *he* need of elocution?"

On some great occasion his whole audience has been known almost unconsciously to rise to their feet and crowd close up around him as he opened to their faith the mysteries of eternity. It was as if he actually saw the great white throne, and Him that sat on it, and



were just about to part the curtains of the sky and give his congregation a glimpse of eternal glory. In him the Church of our time has had a forcible suggestion of the supernatural power that dwells in the word of God, while his self-forgetful soul, wholly possessed by the truth of the Gospel and its mission of salvation, was thus prepared for the highest uses which God ever makes of men.

The Bishop's literary labors have already been mentioned. His "Cyclopædia of Methodism" is a treasury of historic material which becomes more and more valuable every year; while his "Yale Lectures on Preaching," especially that on "Pulpit Power," will long remain not only a masterful treatise on sanctified rhetoric, but also a monument of Christian catholicity, by which both the lecturer and the institution in whose halls he spoke alike receive distinguished praise.

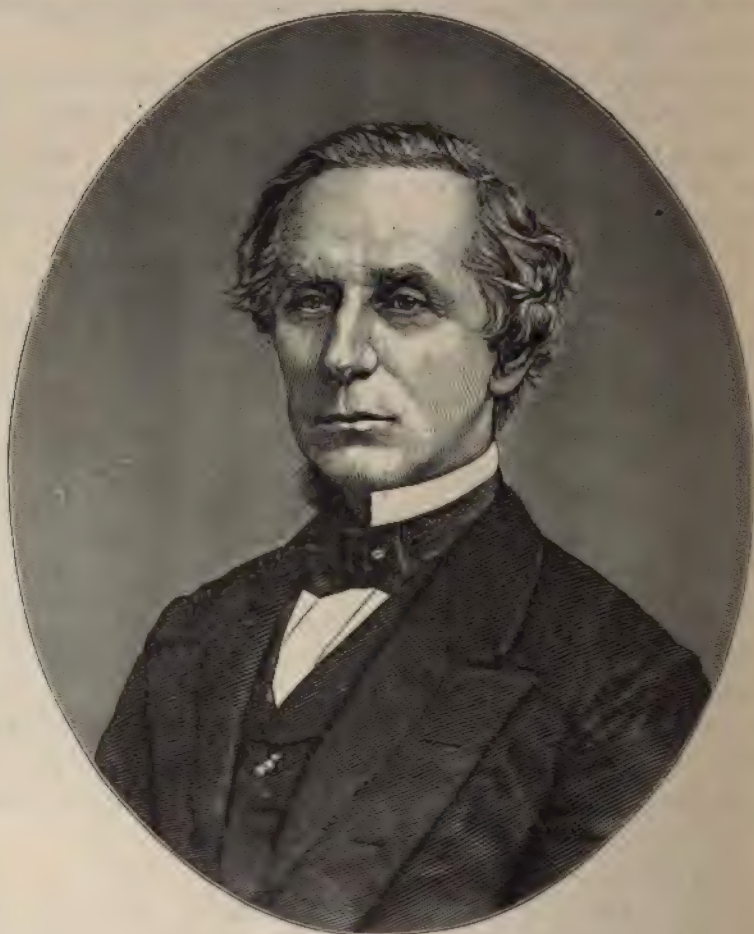
Bishop Simpson was born in Cadiz, Ohio, on the 20th of June, 1811; studied at Madison, afterward Alleghany, College, in which, at the age of eighteen, he was elected tutor. He first studied medicine, and had entered upon the practice of that profession, when, at the call of the Lord, he entered the ministry and joined the Pittsburgh Conference in 1833. Bishop Simpson resides in Philadelphia: he lives in the heart of the Church.

**Bishop Bowman.**—In 1872 the General Conference elected eight new Bishops to re-enforce the four effective men whose vast labors for so many years had now become oppressive. One reason assigned for so large an addition to the episcopal college at once was, the removal of elections from the General Conference for a long time to come; a course which had this other advantage, namely, the commencement of the episcopal training of a large class of men who would thus be constantly gaining on the duties of the office.

In this grandest field of labor open to Christian ambition on earth is found the best imaginable school for educating great men. No petty diocese confines their efforts and limits the scale of their plans. The Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church may have the round earth for their circuit; one of them, Bishop Harris, has actually traveled it. Occasionally a suggestion is heard that our Church, by fixing the residences of its Bishops, is approaching a diocesan episcopacy. Not so. The size and quality of the men produced by a world-wide and long-time episcopal training, as compared with what might be



looked for in a class of prelates shut up to a single State of the Union, or sometimes to a half or quarter of a State, ought forever to banish all thoughts of a diocesan episcopacy from our communion. With such names as Asbury, and Hedding, and Janes in our annals, and the



BISHOP BOWMAN.

material and opportunity for producing others like them, the Church ought to be in no danger of so far backsliding from its discipline and its sagacity as to cage up its eagles, and doom itself to endure the small dignities of a class of local prelates whose work must be done in a corner.



The first\* of the eight bishops elected at the Brooklyn General Conference in 1872 was the Rev. Thomas Bowman, D.D., LL.D., whose service to the Church had been chiefly in its Western literary institutions, he having been elected to the Episcopacy from the Presidency of the Indiana Asbury University, which chair he had held since 1859. Bishop Bowman is a native of Columbia County, Pennsylvania, born July 15, 1817. He was a student both at Wilbraham and Cazenovia Academies, and graduated with first honors from Dickinson College in the class of 1837. He is classed as one of the conservative bishops; more, however, because of the evenness and gentleness of his nature, than any slowness of appreciation of great principles or opportunities. His chosen residence is St. Louis.

**Bishop Harris.**—The Rev. William L. Harris, D.D., LL.D., was long prominent in the Church, as Assistant Missionary Secretary with the venerable Dr. Durbin. He was born near Mansfield, Ohio, November 14, 1817, was converted in 1834, entered the ministry in the Michigan Conference in 1837, but was afterward transferred to the North Ohio Conference. He is not a college graduate, but he enjoys the distinction of being versed both in classical and theological learning, having studied the ancient tongues by the light of pine knots in the cabins, and read theology with his book resting on the horn of his saddle as he traveled his early circuits.

In 1856 he first appeared in the General Conference, which body elected him its Secretary and this post he filled by unanimous consent at every subsequent conference until his election to the bishopric in 1872. He is our "Missionary Bishop." A map of his tour over the eastern hemisphere, showing the chief points of his itinerary, appears in the opening pages of this volume. His chosen residence was Chicago; from whence, on the death of Bishop Janes, he removed to New York by the special desire of the eastern Bishops, in view of his great familiarity with the management of affairs at the missionary and publishing head-quarters of the Church. As secretary of the General Conference, the important duty of editing the quadrennial editions of the Discipline fell to his hands. He also prepared the editions of 1872 and 1876. He has published a volume on *The Powers of the General Conference*, and a work jointly with Judge Henry, on *Eccle-*

\* Priority in this case is reckoned by the number of votes received.



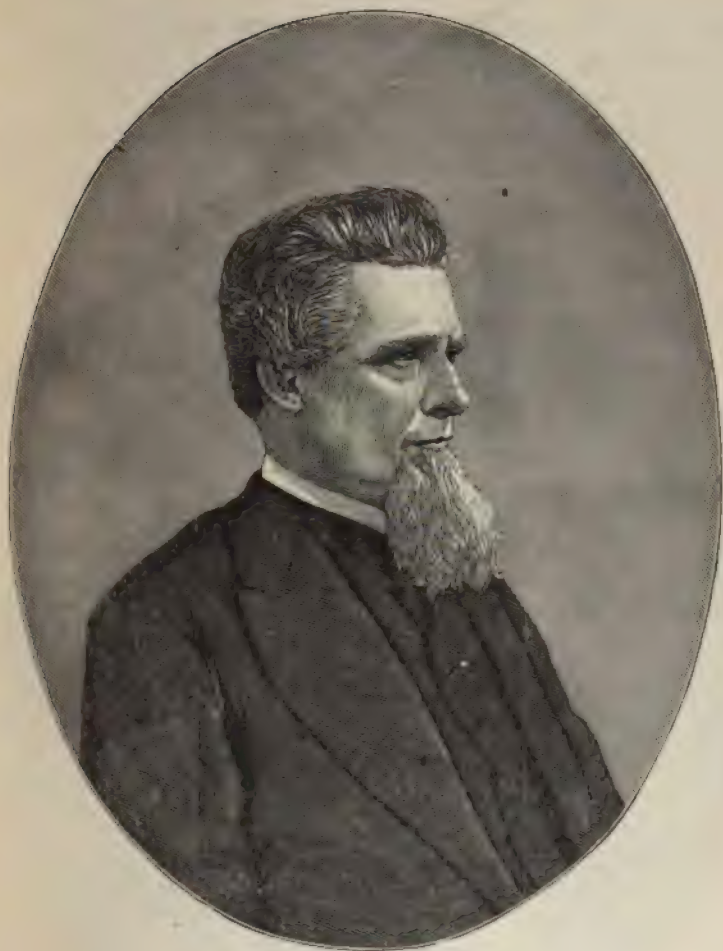


BISHOP HARRIS.

siastical Law. His buoyant, cheery spirit is contagious; his labors are abundant, and his Western vigor joined to his cosmopolitan experience and observation give him force and favor throughout the Church.

**Bishop Foster.**—Randolph S. Foster, D.D., LL.D., was elected to the Episcopate from the presidency of Drew Theological Seminary; to which office he succeeded on the death of the Rev. Dr. McClintock, in 1870, having served as a professor in that institution since 1868. Bishop Foster is a native of Ohio; born at Williamsburgh, February 22d, 1820. He entered the Ohio Conference in his eighteenth year, and early distinguished himself both as a preacher and a defender of Methodist theology with his pen. He is distinguished as author and theologian. His more notable volumes are, "Christian Purity," "Life





BISHOP FOSTER.

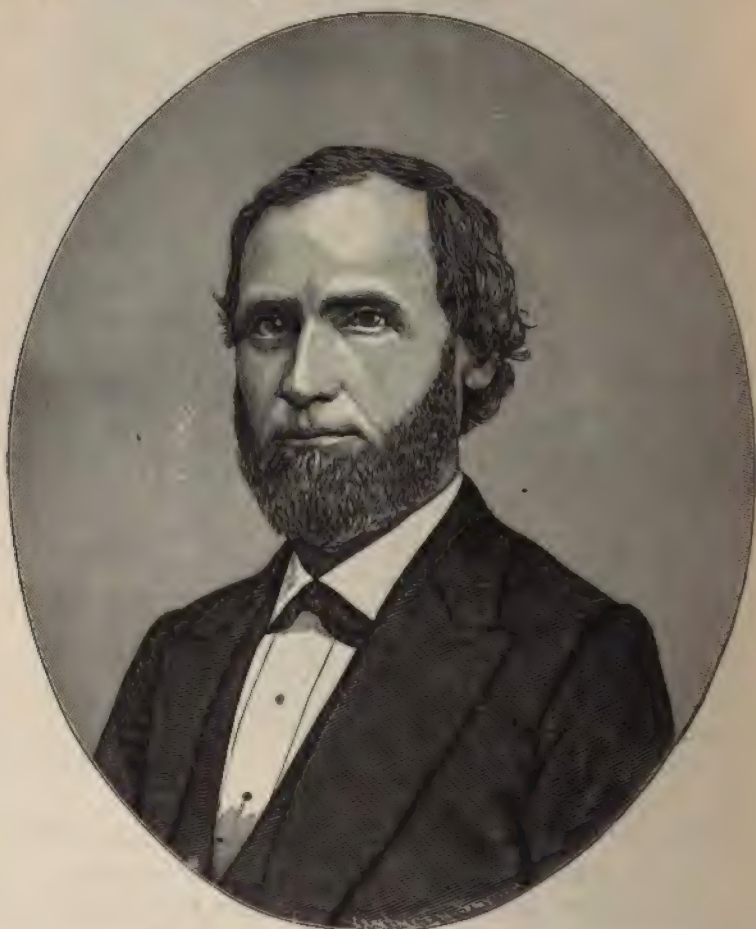
Beyond the Grave," some controversial writings on Calvinism, and a work on Systematic Theology. His residence is Boston, Mass.

**Bishop Wiley.**—The Rev. Isaac W. Wiley, D.D., is another of our Bishops whose name is intimately associated with missionary work, he having served for four years in the Chinese mission, and on his return published a volume entitled, "The Fallen Missionaries of Foo-chow." He was born in Lewistown, Pa., March 29, 1825, united with the Methodist Episcopal Church at ten years of age; graduated in medicine from the University of New York in 1846; joined the East



Genesee Conference in 1850; sailed for China in the spring of 1858; was editor of the "Ladies' Repository" from 1864 until his election as Bishop in 1872.

In 1877 he was chosen to make a survey of our missions in China and Japan. His residence is Cincinnati.



BISHOP WILEY.

**Bishop Merrill.**—The State of Ohio may be called the mother of Bishops, as Virginia has been "the mother of Presidents." The Rev. Stephen M. Merrill, D.D., is the fifth man elected to the Episcopacy who commenced his ministry in the Ohio Conference; one



has been chosen from the North Ohio Conference, and four others have been elevated to this highest office in the Church from editorial positions in Cincinnati. Thus, ten out of the twenty-nine native Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church have been Ohioans, either by birth or office, or both.



BISHOP MERRILL.

Bishop Merrill is a native of Mount Pleasant, Ohio; was born September 16, 1825; was admitted to the Ohio Conference in 1846; first distinguished himself as a debater on the floor of the Chicago General Conference in 1868, at which session he was elected to the



editorship of the "Western Christian Advocate," at Cincinnati; and four years later was elected bishop.

He is the author of two books, one on "Christian Baptism," and one on the "Second Coming of Christ." His first episcopal residence was St. Paul, whence he removed to Chicago, on the removal of Bishop Harris to New York.



BISHOP ANDREWS.

**Bishop Andrews** was elevated to the episcopacy immediately from the pastorate; a fact worthy of note, it being an exception to the usual workings of Methodist Church politics; though he had previously



served the Church as an educator both in the Cazenovia Seminary and the Mansfield (Ohio) Female College.

Edward G. Andrews, D.D., was born in New Hartford, N. Y., August 7, 1825; entered the Church while yet a child; was admitted to the Oneida Conference in 1848; was transferred to the New York East in 1868; and in 1872 was elected Bishop by the Brooklyn General Conference, from the pastorate of the St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church in that city.

His duties have called him to extensive travels among our missions both in Europe and Asia. His residence is Des Moines, Iowa.

**Bishop Haven.**—The Rev. Gilbert Haven, the literary genius, the radical reformer, is one of the most admired and best hated men in America. By the irresistible bent of his nature he moves in the van of events. His eye is toward the future; for the past he often manifests a somewhat troublesome contempt. With him gray errors and venerable wrongs are no more entitled to respect than if they were of to-day: he would crush the head of the original serpent which appeared in Eden without stopping to think of its value as an ophidian specimen or a theological curiosity. Bishop Haven is a fair illustration of what New England, and especially Boston, can produce in the way of religious agitators and leaders; a man of the William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips type; with no whit less of devotion and self-abandonment to the principles he holds, yet with a mighty love for the Church of Christ and a heart full of good fellowship and Methodist religion. The element of fear seems wanting in his composition; he is brave enough to be singular. With him a minority is no discouragement provided it be arrayed for the defense of a great truth. He believes God. Why, then, in his case as well as that of Abraham, shall it not be "counted unto him for righteousness?" One such man is enough to keep a whole Christian communion from going to sleep; a dozen such could revolutionize a nation.

Bishop Haven was born in Malden, one of the suburban towns of Boston, on the 19th of September, 1821. He was converted while a student at the Wilbraham Academy, and in 1846 graduated at the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn. After five years as teacher and principal at Amenia Seminary he joined the New England Conference in 1851, and ten years after, on the breaking out of the war, he en-



listed in the famous 8th Massachusetts Regiment, of which he was made chaplain; his commission being the first one issued for that service. He visited Europe and the East in 1862-63, and in 1866 was elected editor of "Zion's Herald," which, under his administration, was one of



BISHOP HAVEN.

the most stirring and independent sheets, secular or religious, ever seen in America, and from the chair of which he was raised to the Episcopacy in 1872.

Of his movements the Church has been kept well informed, for the Bishop has by no means overcome the editor. He has braved the



African fever for the sake of strengthening the brethren in that dark continent, and if the Church should ever have another forlorn hope to lead during his lifetime, what there may be left of him will be eager to lead it. "The Pilgrim's Wallet," "Life of Father Taylor," "Our Next-door Neighbor; or, A Winter in Mexico," and "National Sermons," are the titles of his published volumes. His official residence is Atlanta, Ga.\*

**Bishop Peck.**—Of a family which in two generations has produced twenty Methodist preachers, the chief historic names are those of the two brothers, George Peck, D.D., and Jesse Trusdell Peck, D.D., LL.D., sons of Luther Peck and Annis (Coller) Peck, born in Middlefield, Otsego County, N. Y.; the former in 1797, and the latter April 4th, 1811. The family was of Puritan stock, their two grandfathers having been soldiers of the Revolution. Bishop Peck was the eleventh child of his mother, and he still remembers her constant prayer in the days of his boyhood, which was answered to the letter: "O Lord, convert my five sons and take them all for the ministry."

His father was for forty years a Methodist class-leader, a blacksmith by trade, and a teacher of music by way of recreation; in both of which arts the embryo bishop was duly instructed. The forge and anvil have now been left behind, but the music remains, and the same life which young Jesse used to play at the head of the column on training days, may still occasionally be heard of a summer evening on the back piazza of the Bishop's residence in Syracuse, N. Y.

In a testimony concerning his early religious life Bishop Peck once said:—

"The doctrines and practices of Methodism have with me no beginning. My conversion occurred at home, five days before I was sixteen years old, at a time when there was no revival. It was the result of the teachings of my mother, and of a sense of duty pressed upon me by the Holy Spirit that it was time to begin a holy life."

Ever since his thirteenth year he had been the chief reliance of his parents, all of whose other sons had entered the ministry; and when Jesse came and said, "I feel called to preach," his father, with the tears raining down his cheeks, replied: "I have opposed all the rest,

\* Bishop Haven died in great triumph, at Malden, Mass., Jan. 3, 1880.



but I promised the Lord that if he would convert you he might have you;" and the lad at once began to do double duty, working by day and studying by night to prepare for his holy mission. He had been the chief declaimer in the district school, and now he began to preach



BISHOP PECK.

for practice. He would preach to the trees in the orchard, to the horse as he rode to mill, to the stones in the wall by the roadside—no bad preparation, this last, for preaching to hard-hearted sinners; and after a career of training, chiefly under the direction of his brother, the late Dr. George Peck, including something of a course at Cazen-



ovia Seminary, he was "called out" by Elder Elias Bowen, and began to work the Courtland Circuit, on which his brothers before him had tried their 'prentice hand.

He got on well enough with the preaching, but for some time he was obliged, from sheer bashfulness, to take his wife along with him when he went to make pastoral calls.

In 1832 he joined the Oneida Conference; in 1841 he became Principal of the Troy Conference Academy, at Poultney, Vt.; from 1848 to 1852 he was president of Dickinson College, and a member of the Baltimore Conference; and in 1859 he was transferred from a pastorate in the city of New York to the rising young Conference on the Pacific Coast, and stationed at the Powell-street Church, San Francisco. Of his eight years' work in California brief mention has already been made.

He brought all the great war questions into his pulpit; preached to crowds on the corners of the streets; spoke for liberty, for loyalty, for free schools, for Christian civilization in every form, and with such effect that upon the coalition of the Republicans and War Democrats he was offered the post of United States Senator for California, which he coolly declined; saying, when urged to accept the nomination, which would be equivalent to an election: "I will not be senator. Find you a man for that office who is not called to the ministry of the Gospel." During his pastorates in San Francisco, Sacramento, Santa Clara, and as Presiding Elder on the San Francisco District, he served as president of the Board of Trustees of the University of the Pacific; and on his return to the East, in 1866, he accepted a similar relation to the Syracuse University, by which he was honored with the degree of Doctor of Laws. He was elected Bishop in 1872. He is the author of "The History of the Great Republic," "The Central Idea of Christianity," "What Must I Do to Be Saved?" and "The True Woman."

#### **General Conference Officers—The Book Concern.**

—At the close of the Revolutionary War John Dickins, a Londoner, who immigrated to America in 1774, and joined the little band of Methodist itinerants in 1777, was stationed at New York in 1783 for the purpose of superintending the publication of Methodist books. He was quite a distinguished scholar among them, having attended the



famous English school at Eton, and therefore was thought to be the most suitable person for an office which included the duties both of editor and publisher.

In the "Minutes of the Conference of 1789" the name of John Dickins appears as Book Steward, and Philip Cox is left without a circuit and appointed Book Steward at Large. For reasons now unknown the publishing business of the Church was at this time removed to Philadelphia, but was brought back to New York in 1804.



METHODIST BOOK CONCERN, 805 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

When Mr. Dickins commenced operations in Philadelphia the Book Concern—now so strong and helpful—possessed little, if any, accumulated capital, and the first Book Steward placed at its disposal from his own private funds, the sum of \$600, wherewith to commence the business. The earlier publications were "The Christian's Pattern," by Thomas à Kempis; an edition of "The Discipline," and "The Saints' Everlasting Rest." It was agreed by the Conference that the profits arising from the sale of books should be applied, under the Conference direction, toward the college, (Cokesbury,) the preachers' fund, the deficiencies of preachers, the district missions, and the



debts of Churches. It was supposed that the profits would amount to at least \$2,500 a year, out of which the Book Steward was to be paid a salary of \$666 33, and the rent of a house. A similar sum was to be divided among the distressed preachers by way of making up the arrears of their unpaid salaries, and the most of the remainder was to go to Cokesbury College. As has already been seen, this college was burned in 1795, and since that time there has been no financial connection between the Concern and the educational system of the Church.

Dickins fell a victim to the yellow fever, which raged with great violence in Philadelphia in 1798. When the disease became epidemic his friends urged him to leave the city, but, having passed through similar calamities in 1793 and 1797 uninjured, he determined to remain at his post; and, to the duties of Book Steward he added those of visitor to the sick and the dying.

On being attacked with the fever he called his wife to his bedside and said, "My dear, I am very ill, but do not be in the least uneasy. Divine Wisdom cannot err. Glory be to God! I can rejoice in his will, whether for life or death. I know all is well."

The grave of this faithful servant of God and the Church was made in the little burying-ground in the rear of St. George's Church; from which almost all the dead were subsequently removed to make room for the residences of the living; but the bones of Dickins remain undisturbed in what is now the back yard of the parsonage of old St. George's, and a tablet to his memory has been fastened to the rear wall of the Church.



THE JOHN DICKINS TABLET.



If there is any romance at all connected with the history of Bishop Asbury, it may appear in the fact that after the death of John Dickins, the Bishop, for a considerable number of years, contributed to the support of his widow and her family. This he did, after the death of his own mother, on the principle, as he said, that it was the duty of every man to provide for some one woman; and his manner of life being such as to preclude the possibility of his having a home of his own, he, in a sense, adopted the widow and family of this faithful man as the objects of this particular charity.

The Methodist Book Concern now consists of two principal establishments and a number of depositories. The New York, or Eastern, Book Concern has depositories at Boston, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and



REV. REUBEN NELSON, D.D.

San Francisco. The Western Concern has branch houses at Chicago, St. Louis, and Atlanta. Depositories on private account exist in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Orleans. During its existence the Book Concern has paid to the various interests of the Church, outside of its



own business, nearly one million eight hundred thousand dollars. Its present capital is something over a million.

**Reuben Nelson, D.D.**, was a native of the State of New York ; born December 13, 1818 ; converted at the age of fifteen ; received into the Oneida Conference in 1838. His first great achievement was the founding of the Wyoming Conference Seminary, at Kingston, Pa., in 1844, of which institution he was the honored head for twenty-seven years. He died at New York, February 20, 1879.

**The Missionary Society.**—As already mentioned, the first systematic missionary movement on this side of the Atlantic was that which commenced with the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1784. Collections were then ordered for sending preachers into the wild regions between the Alleghany Mountains and the Mississippi River ; an arrangement which shows how truly Methodism in America, no less than in Great Britain, was itself a great missionary movement. The first preachers sent out to the Colonies by Mr. Wesley were called "Missionaries," and far into the present century this was still the title given to ministers sent out by the English Conferences to the Societies in British America.

The first form of what is now the Missionary Society, was set up at New York in the year 1819, chiefly under the direction of the Rev. Nathan Bangs, D.D., and the Rev. Joshua Soule, afterward Bishop Soule, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In the following year it was recognized by the General Conference, and gradually came to be the great public charity of the Church. At this General Conference Dr. Bangs was elected Book Agent at New York, and to the duties of this office he gratuitously added those of Secretary, Vice-president, and Treasurer of the fledgling Missionary Society, whose first mission was among the Wyandotte Indians, and whose work for the next thirteen years was wholly among the red men in Canada and the Territories, and among the black men of the South. Its first foreign mission was in Liberia, which was established in 1833, where now there is a conference which in 1878 reported 18 ministers, 47 local preachers, and a total membership of 2,110.

The next important foreign work of the Society was the inauguration of the China Mission in 1847, with its head-quarters at Foochow. This was in 1878 a conference with 34 ministers, 50 local preachers, and a



total membership of 2,011. Two other missions, one in Central and one in Southern China have since been established, and there is an interesting Chinese Mission in San Francisco. For a complete list of the missions of this Society the reader is referred to the proper table of statistics at the end of this volume.\*

**John P. Durbin, D.D.**, is still remembered as one of the most magnetic advocates and preachers, both on the platform and in the pulpit, that the Church in America ever produced. Beginning in a weak, whining tone, and with a slow, drawing movement, he invariably disappointed his auditors who had come for the first time to



JOHN P. DURBIN, D.D.

hear "the great Dr. Durbin;" but in a few minutes, as he became more and more impressed with his subject, his voice and manner would change, first to earnestness, then to eloquence, then to flashes of light and bursts of power which overwhelmed his great congregations, and sometimes called forth such an irrepressible tempest of responses as to drown the voice of the speaker and compel him to break off his

\* For a history of the Society from its commencements, see "Missions and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church," by Rev. J. M. Reid, D.D., 2 vols., New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1879.



discourse. He was a Kentuckian by birth. In 1852 he was elected Missionary Secretary, and at the close of twenty memorable years, during which he saw the annual income of the great charity of the Church mount up from \$100,000 to nearly \$700,000, he resigned his place, retired from public life, and died of paralysis October 18, 1876.

**Thomas M. Eddy, D.D.**—Of the three men chosen to succeed Dr. Durbin one has joined the immortals. Dr. Eddy was a western man by birth, manner, breadth, and spirit. He was born near Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1823, at which time "The Ohio" was one of the far-a-way regions toward the setting sun. In 1842 he joined the Indiana Conference, edited "The North-western Christian Advocate" from 1856 to 1868, held foremost rank as an editor and patriot, doubt-



THOMAS M. EDDY, D.D.

led the circulation of his paper, became the acknowledged prince of Church dedicators in the North-west, and on his return to the pastorate secured the erection of the magnificent Mt. Vernon Place Church, in the city of Baltimore. His next station was the Metropolitan Church, Washington, D. C., from which he was elected Missionary Secretary in 1872. His death occurred in New York, October 7, 1874.

**The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society** is among the most successful of the Church societies, and may appropriately have a place in this connection, though none of its officers are elected by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It



was organized in 1869, and consists of a General Executive Committee, co-ordinate branches, and auxiliary societies.

The head-quarters of the several branches are as follows: Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Chicago, Des Moines, New Orleans, Atlanta, and San Francisco. Its purpose is to do specific Christian work among heathen women. Its members pay a fee of \$1 annually.

The administrative power is lodged with the General Executive Committee, which consists of the Corresponding Secretaries and two delegates from each branch, and meets annually.

In the interim of the Executive Committee meetings the general administration is lodged with the Committee of Reference, consisting of the Corresponding Secretaries, as follows: Mrs. M. P. Alderman, Hyde Park, Mass.; Mrs. H. B. Skidmore, 9 East 17th-street, New York; Mrs. J. F. Keen, 1209 Arch-street, Philadelphia; Miss Isabel Hart, 176 North Calvert-street, Baltimore; Mrs. W. A. Ingham, 203 Franklin-street, Cleveland, Ohio; Mrs. Jennie F. Willing, 186 Vincennes Avenue, Chicago; Mrs. Lucy E. Prescott, Winona, Minnesota; Mrs. E. Q. Fuller, Atlanta, Georgia.

Receipts from February 10, 1877, to February, 1878, \$61,665 08; total since organization, \$411,464 06. The Society issues monthly, "The Heathen Woman's Friend," Mrs. W. F. Warren, editor; Mrs. L. H. Daggett, 36 Bromfield-street, Boston, Publishing Agent.

**Sunday-Schools.**—The year 1790 was signalized by an ordinance of the Methodist Conference, establishing Sunday-schools for the instruction of poor children, white and black; on which subject the Minutes say, "Let us labor as the heart and soul of one man to establish Sunday-schools in or near the place of public worship. Let persons be appointed by the bishops, elders, deacons, or preachers, to teach (gratis) all that will attend and have a capacity to learn, from six o'clock in the morning till ten, and from two o'clock in the afternoon until six, where it does not interfere with public worship. The Council shall compile a proper school-book to teach them learning and piety." This is supposed to be the first official establishment of Sunday-schools by any American Church. Only about nine years had passed since their commencement in England.

It has been the custom to credit Robert Raikes with the projection



of this new means of grace, at Gloucester, in England, in 1781, but the idea was not his own. It was suggested to him by a young Methodist woman—afterward the wife of Samuel Bradburn, one of Wesley's most distinguished preachers, who assisted Raikes in forming the first school at Gloucester.\* Of the Sunday School Union and of the Tract Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Dr. J. H. Vincent is the distinguished Secretary, and Editor of their publications.

Wesley was the first public man in England to approve of this new method of religious instruction, and in 1784 publicly recommended his people to adopt it. During the same year Fletcher of Madeley introduced it into his parish, and in 1786—four years before the Conference order above mentioned, and five years before the subject was taken up by any other body of Christians in America—Bishop Asbury established the first Sunday-school in the New World, in Hanover County, Virginia, at the house of Thomas Crenshaw. Thus the Sunday-school movement, which has grown up to be one of the most efficient and popular means of grace, may rightly be said to be one of the products—both in England and America—of the great Methodist revival.†

**The Church Extension Society.**—The Board of Church Extension is located at Philadelphia. It was organized in 1864. Its object is to aid feeble Societies in the erection of houses of worship. During the fifteen years of its existence it has received, \$870,968 93, and its loan fund amounts to about \$300,000 more. It is one of the most successful charities of the Church, and its influence is widely extending. The Secretary and moving spirit of this noble Society is the Rev. Alpha J. Kynett, D.D., a Pennsylvanian by birth, and a member of the Iowa Conference. He is favored in having as his efficient assistant the well-known "Chaplain M'Cabe."

**The Freedmen's Aid Society** was organized at Cincinnati on 7th of August, 1866. To it the ex-slaves of the South are indebted for the establishment and chief support of the following institutions: Central Tennessee College, Nashville, Tenn.; Shaw University, Holly Springs, Miss.; Claflin University, Orangeburgh, S. C.; Clark University, Atlanta, Ga.; New Orleans University, New Orleans, La.;

\* Memoir of Sophia Bradburn, in *Wesleyan Magazine* for 1834.

† See STREVEN'S "History of M. E. Church," vol. ii, page 504.



Wiley University, Marshall, Tex.; Haven Normal School, Waynesborough, Ga.; Rust Biblical and Normal Institute, Huntsville, Ala.; La Teche Seminary, Baldwin, La.; Bennett Seminary, Greensborough, N. C.; Cookman Institute, Jacksonville, Fla.; Centenary Biblical Institute, Baltimore, Md.; Orphans' Home, Baldwin, La. The cash receipts of the Society during the past twelve years have been nearly eight hundred thousand dollars. Secretary Rust is a Massachusetts man, and a graduate of the Wesleyan University in the class of 1841.



DICKINSON COLLEGE, CARLISLE, PA.

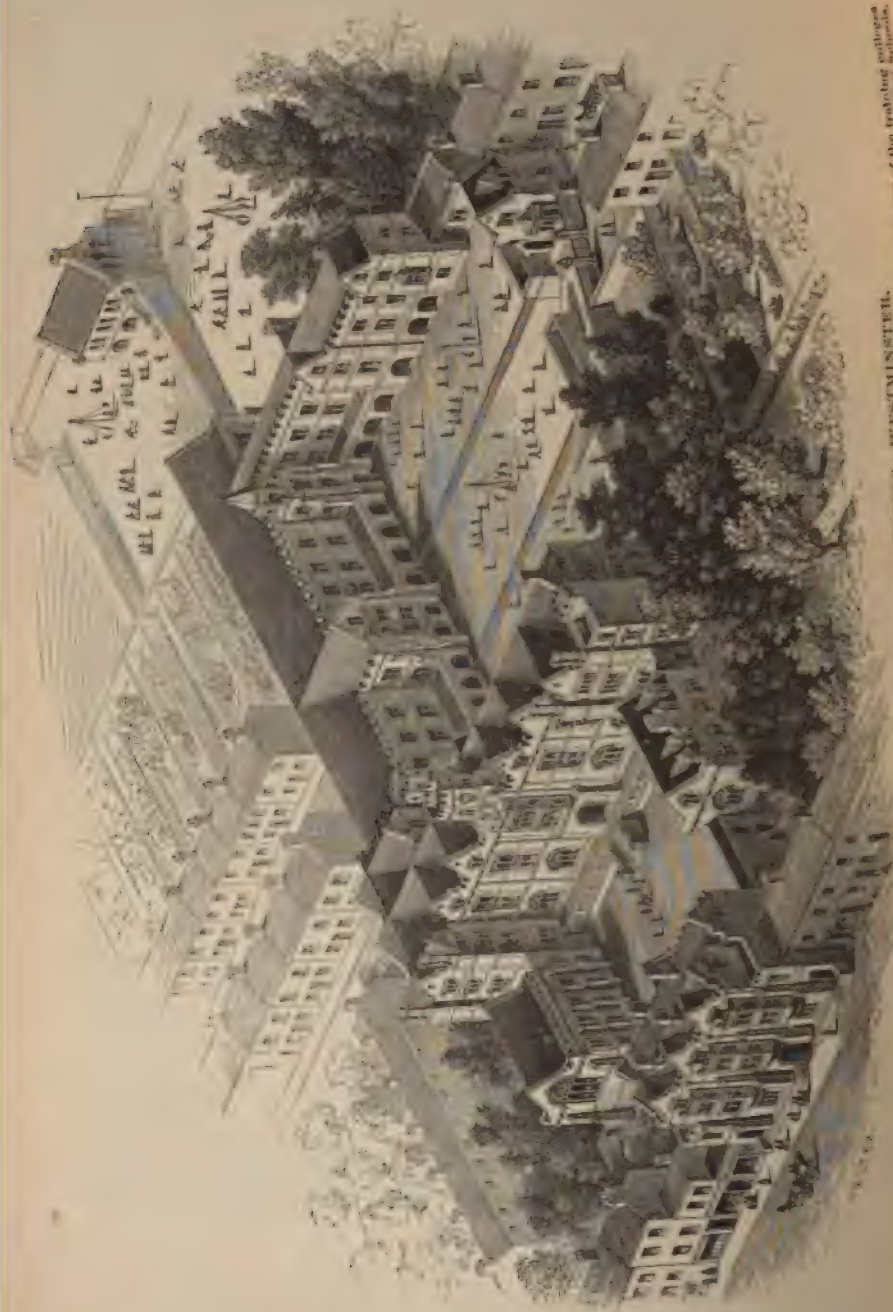




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PART III.  
MODERN BRITISH AND COLONIAL  
METHODISM.





WESLEYAN NORMAL AND PRACTISING SCHOOLS, WESTMINSTER.

This institution, under the charge of the Rev. James H. Thompson, D.D., who was President of the British Wesleyan Conference in 1878, is one of the leading colleges for the training of the Wesleyan Theological students. It is situated in the heart of the city, and is one of the most beautiful and commodious of modern buildings. In 1878 there were 100 of these Theological students.





JABEZ BUNTING, D.D.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### MODERN BRITISH METHODISM.

**After John Wesley, What?**—It was quite confidently predicted that the death of Wesley would be followed by a general break-up among his people, a prophecy which had a very narrow escape from fulfillment, chiefly over the question of the relations of Methodism to the Established Church of England.

Methodism was now over fifty years of age, and a large proportion of its members had been born within its fold. There were many others who had never been Episcopalians at all, but were brought in from the outside world; while a few, usually the wealthier and more ambitious class of members of the Societies, still clung with great tenacity to the Establishment. From among this latter class the financial officers were naturally selected, and it was the desire of these would-be aristocrats among the Methodists, now that their chief was dead, to control the affairs of the Connection by virtue of their property and



social distinction. There was also a strife over the question of sacraments; the one class, called by their opponents the "High-church party," demanding that the original *status* of Methodism as a society within, and subordinate to, the Established Church, should be maintained; the other, significantly named "Dissenters," claiming that Methodism had a life and mission of its own. The former desired to keep in the good graces of the Church by limiting the functions of the itinerant preachers to the work of lay evangelists; while the masses of the membership could not see why their ministers were not just as good as parish parsons, and entitled to celebrate the sacraments as well as to preach the Gospel.

In the midst of contentions between the "High-church party" and the "Dissenters," the forty-eighth Conference, being the first after Wesley's death, assembled at Manchester on the 26th of July, 1791. More than three hundred preachers were present, and all who were in full connection were allowed the privileges of membership, according to Wesley's request. William Thompson, of Halifax, was chosen President, and Dr. Thomas Coke was made Secretary.

One of its first acts was to establish a system of districts, each comprising from three to eight circuits, giving to England seventeen districts, to Scotland two, to Ireland five, and to Wales one. As a substitute for the chief episcopal function hitherto exercised by Mr. Wesley—that of stationing the preachers—it was determined that the ministers in full connection in each district should meet at the call and under the presidency of their chairman, and should elect one of their number to represent them in a stationing committee. This committee was required to meet at the place appointed for the session of the Conference at least three days previous to its opening, to prepare and report a plan for stationing the preachers in England and Scotland; and a similar committee was appointed for the Irish Conference, whose President was still to be elected from, and sent over by, the British Conference, and who was to be an *ex-officio* member of the Irish stationing committee.

This arrangement was reached with so much unanimity and good feeling that the troublesome question of the sacraments was by common consent passed over, and for the time being it was agreed "to follow strictly the plan which Mr. Wesley left us at his death."



At this Conference 326 preachers received appointments. Twelve candidates were admitted on trial, and fifteen were placed on the reserve list as not being immediately needed, but entitled to come in on trial as vacancies might occur. The number of members reported in the Societies of the United Kingdom was 72,468, besides 6,525 in the mission societies in British America and the West Indies. The increase in membership during the year was reported to be 1,825.

**The Episcopal Party.—“Superintendent” Mather.**

—It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Mr. Wesley intended an episcopal form of organization for the British as well as for the American Conference after his death; for, as we have seen, not only did he ordain Dr. Coke as “superintendent” for America, but he also ordained Alexander Mather to the same office, and with the same title, for service in Great Britain, in addition to the considerable number of men whom he ordained as *elders* for home and foreign fields.

“Superintendent” Mather, at his ordination in 1788, was one of the fathers of the Conference—a man who is described in the official notice inserted in the Conference Minutes after his death as “a perfect master of all the *minutiae* of doctrine and discipline of Methodism.” “Hereby,” says the record, “he was enabled to afford Mr. Wesley very considerable assistance in the superintendence of the Societies. His wisdom and experience, his courage and perseverance, rendered him an invaluable friend to our Connection during some late troubles under which it suffered. He was never intimidated by any fear of calumny from pursuing those plans which he conceived to tend toward the peace and union of the Societies. His noble soul was elevated above the momentary opinion of a party. He looked only at the interests and glory of the Redeemer’s kingdom, and waited for his reward in a better world.”\* Such was the bishop chosen and ordained by Wesley to succeed himself, whom the Conference deliberately rejected; and Mather, after vainly presenting himself to his brethren in the name of the historic and apostolic orders conferred upon him, modestly resumed his place among them, and finished a godly and successful ministry as an itinerant preacher, of forty-two years. His death occurred in 1800, nine years after that of Wesley.

\* “Minutes,” vol. ii, p. 82.



On the second of April, 1794, "Superintendents" Coke and Mather, Drs. Pawson, Taylor, and Moore, and Revs. Messrs. Richardson, Bradburn, and Adam Clarke held a private consultation at Lichfield, and drafted a memorial to the Conference setting forth the fact that Methodism possessed an episcopacy in the persons of Drs. Coke and Mather, whom Mr. Wesley had ordained as "superintendents," and proposed that without any avowed separation from the Church of England "there be an order of superintendents appointed by the Conference, by whom lay preachers who desired, and all who should thereafter be admitted into full connection, should be ordained." It was also proposed that "Superintendents" Coke and Mather should ordain six other superintendents, who should preside respectively over the eight districts into which the Connection should be divided; their location being subject to annual change at the pleasure of the Conference.

This would have given to British Methodism a form more in accordance with Mr. Wesley's idea than that which ultimately prevailed, but it was destined to fail for three reasons: first, because it would have set up an order of aristocracy among the preachers, of which thing these Englishmen had somewhat too much already, both in Church and State; second, the plan was proposed by eight men, seven of whom announced themselves as candidates for the episcopal office; and third, the High-church party regarded this as of all others the most schismatic and revolutionary course which the Methodists could pursue, and therefore rallied all their forces against it.

After much controversy the Conference, at its session in 1794, re-affirmed its statement that "imposition of hands is not essential to ordination, but merely a circumstance, although generally a suitable and significant one; the act of admission into the ministry, so as to be devoted wholly to it, and to exercise the pastoral charge, being the true scriptural ordination both to preach the word and to administer the sacraments," thus giving an official *status* to the regular members of the Conference, though one which the High-church party would not recognize.

**"Alarming Progress of Methodism!"**—The Wesleyan movement having now safely weathered the point where its enemies had hoped to see it wrecked, certain of them set themselves to work to write it down. Under the labors of such men as Benson, Bramwell,



and Olivers, in England; Ouseley and Graham, in Ireland; Jones and Davis, in Wales, the three kingdoms were, during the fifteen years immediately succeeding the death of Mr. Wesley, lighted up with glorious revivals of religion; while Dr. Coke, who was a whole missionary society in himself, was extending his outposts through destitute regions at home and abroad, collecting money or giving his own, finding out suitable men, and keeping the whole body astir by the brilliancy of his efforts and the splendor of his success. Some of



RICHARD WATSON, D.D.,

Author of *Watson's Theological Institutes*, the standard work in Methodist Systematic Theology. He was born in Lincolnshire, England, 1781; was ordained in the Wesleyan Conference in 1800; published his "Institutes" in 1828-29; and died in London in 1833.

the fathers were falling, but their sons were rising to take their places. Already Jabez Bunting and Richard Watson were beginning to show great promise of power, while Dr. Adam Clarke, by means of his almost unequaled scholarship, was bringing great honor to the Wesleyan body, of which, after the Wesleys and Dr. Coke, he must be counted the brightest ornament.

The partisans of the State Church had tried to stamp out this Methodist fire, but they only succeeded in spreading it more widely; then they tried letting it alone; but still it went on increasing, till in



the year 1800 one of the British reviews began to toll the alarm bell. After showing that the Methodist body had multiplied, from twenty-nine thousand four hundred and six, in 1770, to one hundred and nine thousand nine hundred and sixty-one in 1880, and that it was increasing steadily at the rate of seven thousand members per annum, the writer of the article cries out, "How long will it be before this people begins to count hands with the Establishment."

At the Conference of 1814 the working of the "Deed of Declaration," which was fast lifting the "Legal Hundred" into a clerical aristocracy, was so far modified that of every four vacancies occurring in that body three were to be filled according to seniority, as before, while one was to be filled by the ballot of those ministers who had been for fourteen years in regular service in the itinerancy. The President and the Secretaries of the Conference were also to be elected by this body of elders instead of by the "Legal Hundred." This change, by which the growth of an oppressive "order of the ancients" was checked, was a measure evidently needed.

**Methodist Ordination.**—At the Conference of 1834 another important change was made, namely, that of ordaining the ministers who were received into full connection. The thirty young men who were that year received were ordained by the President of the Conference, assisted by the ex-President and Secretary; the following formula being used on the occasion:—

"Mayest thou receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Christian minister now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands, and be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God and of his Holy Sacraments, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." This mode of ordination is still in use by the Wesleyan Methodists, who, though steadily refusing to be called "Dissenters," hereby continually and significantly show their dissent.

**Bunting, the Prime Minister of English Methodism.**—The list of preachers on trial at the Conference of 1799 contains two names destined to be held in immortal honor: Jabez Bunting and Robert Newton. The former of these, next to Wesley, was the most imperial spirit which ever ruled the Wesleyan Connection, and right worthily did he continue the magisterial succession.

He was born in the village of Moneyash, in Derbyshire, in the year



1779. His mother, a devoted Methodist, gave him to God in his infancy, trained him up to attend all the means of grace, and at the age of fifteen had the blessed satisfaction of seeing him received as a full member of the Methodist Society, and admitted to the Conference at twenty years of age. He at once took rank as a brilliant and powerful preacher; indeed, it has been said of him that he "started on his course of preaching at an elevation which precluded the reasonable hope of any future marked improvement."

In view of the rapid advancement of this young man it was sometimes said that he was "born under a fortunate star." However this may have been, his rare endowments and his sagacity in making the most of his opportunities easily kept him at the front. For many years he was almost the autocrat of the Conference, a position which he held because of his manifest fitness for it, but one which could not fail to call out some very sore complaints from certain men who, unlike him, were not born to command, but who still did not like to obey. One of the men who had felt the weight of his hand as an administrator of the law, and, therefore, could not have been prejudiced in his favor, said of him: "If Jabez Bunting had devoted himself to politics instead of preaching, he might have been Prime Minister of England."

**Bunting and Lay Representation.**—At first the management of all Connectional interests was in the hands of ministerial committees. This, Dr. Bunting saw, was not the best way to draw out the hearts and the contributions of the people, and he proposed to add to the twenty-four ministers composing the missionary committee an equal number of laymen; which measure, in spite of determined clerical opposition, he finally carried; and this policy has since been pursued in the organization of all conference committees having financial interests in charge; thus giving to this strictly clerical, aristocratic body a freedom and breadth of administration which comes but little short of conceding what the reformers under the lead of Dr. Warren claimed but failed to secure, and which leaves an ever-widening gate by which they may at any time return with honor and be received with joy.

**Robert Newton.**—Glorious Robert Newton! One of the greatest masters of the art of preaching the Gospel that Methodism ever produced, and, like his friend Bunting, famous chiefly for his



labors in the cause of missions. Bunting was next to Wesley in administrative ability; his intimate friend, Newton, as an advocate was almost Whitefield over again.

He was born at Roxby, a little sea-coast village in Yorkshire, on the 8th of September, 1780. His parents were zealous Methodists; so were all their eight children, and from among the sons of this notable household four became preachers of the Gospel. In person Robert Newton was tall and commanding; his voice was deep, mellow, and capable of expressing all shades of feeling; his manner was solemn and impressive; he spoke as one having a message from heaven, and there was about him an atmosphere of sanctity which told of his absolute devotion to, and constant communion with, the Lord. It was during his first appointment in London, at a meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, that his power as a platform orator was first discovered. While in the metropolis he also co-operated with Dr. Coke in missionary work, caught the infectious zeal of that tireless man, and during the rest of his life Robert Newton was the most popular advocate of missions in England. He disclaimed any talent for the details of business, but abroad among the people he was without a compeer in the great cause. When he commenced his public labors for the missionary society there were but fifty Wesleyan missionaries with about seventeen thousand communicants under their care; he lived to see them increased to more than three hundred and fifty missionaries and one hundred thousand communicants.

Of the other great names in what Dr. Smith calls "The Middle Age of Methodism," as well as of the other branches of British Methodism, the limits of this volume forbid further notice.

**Centenary of British Methodism.**—The Centennial Conference of 1839 appointed Friday, the 25th of October, to be observed throughout the Connection as the festival day, with prayer-meeting early in the morning, sermons in the forenoon and evening, as on the Sabbath, and jubilees for the poor, and for the children of the Sunday-schools and day-schools in the afternoon.

When this great day arrived the whole Methodist world united in a celebration which was never equaled by any Protestant religious body either in its magnificence or its liberality. The aggregate sum contributed by the various Methodist bodies in England and America



was more than seventeen hundred thousand dollars, and that, too, without interfering with their stated collections; and during a year of almost unparalleled commercial depression.

At the Centenary Conference, which met at Liverpool July 31st, 1839, there were one hundred and eighteen candidates for admission to the itinerant ministry, and the increase of membership of the Societies for the closing year of the first Methodist century was over sixteen thousand souls. The entire British Wesleyan membership was as follows: Great Britain, 307,068; Ireland, 26,383; Mission Stations, 72,727; total, 406,178.



WESLEYAN THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION AT RICHMOND, NEAR LONDON.

**"The Wesleyan Theological Institution,** for the improvement of the junior preachers," was established in 1834, in a dingy little building at Hoxton, about half a mile from City Road Chapel, and Jabez Bunting, in addition to all his other duties and honors, was elected its first President.

As its name indicates, the institution was for the further training of the young men who had passed their preliminary local examinations and had been placed on the Reserve List of the Conference. The school was so great a success that larger accommodations were required, and at length the elegant Theological Hall at Richmond Hill, near London, was erected out of the avails of the Centenary Fund,



and opened as the southern branch of the Wesleyan Theological Institution, on the 15th of September, 1843. In 1863 it was purchased by the Wesleyan Missionary Society out of the avails of the Jubilee Fund, and thus the Richmond Theological School became a missionary college, whose existence is one of the chief glories of English Methodism, and where a large class of young men, who have proved their efficiency by four years' work on some home circuit, are constantly in training for foreign fields of labor, by a thorough missionary course of instruction, including the language of the country to which they



REV. WM. B. POPE, D.D.

have been assigned, and other practical branches of learning which the experience of the Society has found to be of service. The President of the institution is the Rev. George Osborn, D.D., an eminent theologian, and one of the ex-Presidents of the British Conference.

**The Didsbury Branch.**—A branch of the Wesleyan Theological Institution was opened at Didsbury, near Manchester, September 22, 1842. Of this school of the Methodist prophets the Rev. William B. Pope, D.D., was appointed Theological Tutor in 1867, which position he still retains. Dr. Pope is personally known in America,



he having been the fraternal delegate of the British Conference to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1876, on which occasion his scholarly bearing and Christian graces greatly endeared him to his American brethren.

The "Systematic Theology," of which Dr. Pope is the author, is much admired on both sides of the Atlantic, and its author ranks among the first masters of this chief department of learning. He was honored by an election to the presidency of the British Conference in 1877.

**The Rev. Dr. Rigg**, who, as Principal of the Westminster Normal Schools, is the official head of the Wesleyan day school system, is one of the most eminent men of the connection. He



REV. JAMES H. RIGG, D.D.

was born in 1821; was one of the best of the Kingswood boys, in which school he excelled, especially in mathematics; entered the Wesleyan Conference in 1845, in which he at once took high rank as a writer on educational subjects.

In 1868 Dr. Rigg was placed at the head of the Westminster Normal and Training Schools, which position he has since filled with very



distinguished success. Ten years afterward he was honored with an election to the chair of the British Conference.

The presidency of Dr. Rigg is memorable by his comprehensive scheme for relieving the various Wesleyan institutions from the debts which had for some time been accumulating. The plan, which has been successfully carried out, was to raise a "Wesleyan Methodist Thanksgiving Fund," by a system of operations not unlike that so effectively used in raising the Centennial and Jubilee Missionary Funds. The report of the General Committee on the Thanksgiving Fund rendered July 17, 1879, showed cash and pledges to the amount of £171,479, 4s. 8d. This large collection, in addition to all the regular annual collections of the body, has been divided between Home and Foreign Missions, the Ministerial Education Fund, the Schools Fund, the Auxiliary Fund, the Children's Home, the Invalid Ministers' Rest Fund, and the North and South Wales Chapel Loan Funds. By this gift Connectional debts to the amount of £58,000 have been paid, and the large surplus goes to the extension and strengthening of the work at the vital points above-mentioned.

**Wesleyan Missions.**—Nothing is more characteristic of Methodism than missions. True to its traditions and its inspiration, the British Conference has maintained the advanced position captured for it by Coke; added to the range of work laid out by Newton, Watson, and Bunting, and kept alive the heroic spirit of its people by ceaseless active operations against barbarism at home and paganism abroad. The scheme of Dr. Coke, which at first to his cautious brethren seemed chimerical, and which was even denounced by some as a monstrous folly whose inevitable failure would bring disaster and disgrace on the Methodist Connection, has been worked out and extended from year to year until, in the year of grace 1879, the British Wesleyan Conference has missionary stations in France, Wurtemberg, Baden, Bavaria, Silesia, Austria, Rome, Naples, Spain, Portugal, Gibraltar, Ceylon, Continental India, China, South Africa, Western Africa, and the British West Indies.

"Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" The mission in India, which Coke projected but did not live to plant, has now increased to 40 mission stations, the Ceylon Mission to 76 stations, and the Cape of Good Hope Mission to no less than 81 stations. Many of



these 197 missions are wide circuits, on which, in addition to the missionary from the British Conference in charge of the work, from one to eight native "evangelists" and "catechists" are employed; for whom literary and theological training schools have been established at Colombo and Galle in the Singhalese District, Ceylon; at Bangalore, in the Mysore District, India; and at Healdtown and Lesseytown in the Grahamstown District, South Africa.



REV. WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON, D.D.

**Rev. William Morley Punshon, LL.D**—The chief Secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society is a right worthy successor to the eminent men who have hitherto guided its affairs.

Perhaps there is no living man—certainly there is but one other—whose name is more familiar throughout the Methodist world than that of this consummate orator and master of affairs. He is thoroughly cosmopolitan. An Englishman by birth—born in Doncaster, in 1824—he



possesses the sturdiness and balance of the English nature; he might be mistaken for an Irishman, for he is the peer of Daniel O'Connell in rich and moving eloquence; and during his presidency of the Canada Wesleyan Conference, from 1868 to 1873, few men of whatever nation ever more fully realized the ideal of an American Methodist Bishop.

During his official residence in Canada Dr. Punshon paid neighborly visits to his brethren in the chief cities of the United States, where, on the tide of his eloquence, he lifted them into ecstasy, and by his rare personal qualities made them almost regret that he had not been born in the republic. In 1868, and again in 1872, he represented the British Conference at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, being the companion on the latter occasion of the Rev. Luke Wiseman, D.D.

In 1875 he was promoted to a secretaryship of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and in the following year reached the highest earthly honor in store for a Wesleyan preacher—the chair of the British Conference.

The general secretaries associated with Dr. Punshon in the Mission House are Revs. Ebenezer E. Jenkins, M.A., and Marmaduke C. Osborn, Secretary of the Wesleyan Conference in 1868.

**Rev. William Arthur, M.A.**, an honorary member of the staff of the British Wesleyan Missionary Society, is a man well-known in America both as a minister and author. He was born in Londonderry, Ireland, in 1819, and was brought up as a Presbyterian. When about twelve years of age he removed with his parents to Westport, a town in Galway, on the shore of the Atlantic, and was put to business there as an apprentice to one of the local traders, where, having come into connection with the Wesleyans, he threw himself with such ardor into all their ways that before he was sixteen he had begun his career as a local preacher, and in 1837 was admitted to the Irish Conference, being then only eighteen years old. After two years' study he offered himself for foreign service, was accepted, and sent to the Mysore Country, in India, where he rapidly acquired the Canarese language, and would, without doubt, have been a most efficient missionary had not his eyes failed him and his health so completely broken down as to compel him to return to England after only two years. His personal history, with



the story of his perilous voyage back, is told in perhaps the best of his books, the "Mission to the Mysore."

His other writings are well-known. His "Successful Merchant" has gone through edition after edition. He has also published a book on Italy; and his "Tongue of Fire" has been very widely popular and useful. During the American Civil War his tongue and pen were vigorously used on the side of the North; his articles in the "London Quarterly," especially, attracting much notice for their ability and fervor.



REV. WILLIAM ARTHUR, M.A.

In 1866 he was elected President of the Conference, being then in his forty-seventh year, the youngest man, with one exception, ever chosen for that honorable post.

**The Metropolitan Chapel Fund** is one of the recent additions to the working force of British Methodism. This noble charity was projected by Sir Francis Lycett, one of the merchant princes of London, who, being deeply interested in the spiritual destitution of the metropolis and its environs, gave £50,000 toward the



erection of fifty Wesleyan chapels, each to hold one thousand hearers, on condition that a similar sum was raised to meet it. This has been done. Another pledge on the same terms, of £10,000 toward the extension of Methodism in country villages, has been made, the conditions of which have also been fulfilled.

This munificent gift of Sir Francis has awakened great interest among the Wesleyan Connection in the evangelization of the metropolis. An annual collection is made in all the London chapels, and subscriptions are also received from a distance. One notable one of a hundred guineas is mentioned in the report of the treasurer for 1878 from "the converted heathens of the Friendly Islands, with King George at their head."



REV. GERVASE SMITH, D.D.

**Rev. Gervase Smith, D.D.**, the General Secretary of this Fund, to which office he was appointed in 1875, is one of the chief British Methodists, and personally known in America. He is now in his fifty-eighth year, and has been since 1845 a minister of the Wesleyan Conference, of which in 1873 he was made Secretary; and of



which in 1876, on the retirement of his life-long friend, Dr. Punshon, he was elected President.

Dr. Smith has some of the best blood of British Methodism in him; a temperament happy in its blending of the most substantial abilities with genial spirits and kindly manners; and is, withal, a goodly specimen of the manly Christian scholarship produced in the Wesleyan Colleges of Sheffield and Didsbury. Like every true Englishman, he knows the meaning of the word "friend;" and the de-



REV. FREDERIC JOBSON, D.D.

lightful brotherhood so long existing between him and his old school-fellow in the Derbyshire village of Marlpool, now the Rev. Dr. Punshon, is rightly held by the Wesleyan ministry as one of the notable, helpful, and honorable facts in the history of the British Conference.

**Rev. Frederic Jobson, D.D.**—This able, eminent, catholic-hearted Christian gentleman, one of the ex-Presidents of the British



Wesleyan Conference and "Book Steward" of the Wesleyan Book Room in London, was born in the cathedral city of Lincoln in 1812. In early life he was brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; and although he had already entered upon what promised to be a high career in the art of architecture, for which he possessed great natural talent, he resigned the advantages which that profession promised to become an itinerant Wesleyan preacher—a career less profitable as the world counts profits, but second in honor, helpfulness and enjoyment to none on earth—and entered the Wesleyan ministry in 1834. In his pastoral work, which occupied him for thirty years, he had the unusual compliment of being returned again and again to the same circuits. In 1856 he was selected to accompany Dr. Hannah, as representative of the Conference to the Methodist Episcopal Church of America, in which country he established a reputation as an earnest and powerful preacher and speaker.

In 1864 he was appointed to the office of "Book Steward," in which capacity he has done much to elevate the character and extend the circulation of Wesleyan literature. In 1869 he was elected President of the Conference, and while in that office he was chiefly instrumental in securing the Wesleyan Memorial, which has since been placed in Westminster Abbey, (see Chapter XII.) Dr. Jobson still preaches as earnestly and powerfully as ever, not only in Methodist pulpits, but occasionally in others; an act common enough in America, but one which in Great Britain is counted worthy of special notice, as indicating the broad catholicity of the man.\*

**The Editor—Rev. Dr. Gregory.**—The Wesleyan Book and Tract Establishment is under the editorial direction of an officer annually appointed by the Conference to have the supervision of the entire system of Wesleyan publications; including the editorship of the "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," the successor of the "Arminian Magazine," established by Mr. Wesley. His term of service is limited to six years, but for special reasons, on recommendation of the Book Committee, he may be continued for six additional years. In the list of Book-room Editors occur the names of Joseph Benson, from 1804

\* The author hereby gratefully acknowledges the kindness and courtesy of the Rev. Dr. Jobson, in furnishing material for this volume from the rich treasury of Methodist history under his charge.



to 1820; Jabez Bunting, from 1821 to 1823; William L. Thornton, from 1849 to 1864, and Benjamin Frankland, from 1864 to 1872.

The present Editor is the Rev. Benjamin Gregory, an eminent scholar and divine, who commenced his ministry in 1840. In 1868 he became one of the Connectional editors in conjunction with the late Rev. B. Frankland, on whose death, in 1876, he was appointed to the sole charge of the English Wesleyan Connectional literature, and is winning a wide-spread reputation for culture and taste.



WILLIAM CARVOSSO,

A Cornish fisherman and farmer, born in the County of Cornwall, 1750, and for over fifty years a lay helper in the south of England. He is famous in Methodist history as "the model class-leader."





VIEW AMONG THE THOUSAND ISLANDS.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### COLONIAL METHODISM.\*

**M**ETHODISM has existed in the territory now included in the Dominion of Canada in widely different forms. At one time it has been a mission, at another a full-fledged Church; in one part of the country it has taken on a Presbyterian form, in another the Episcopal form; dividing and crystallizing at last into both the prominent orders of Methodist Church government.

The British Provinces of North America, including Newfoundland, Prince Edward's Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba, extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific—a distance of three thousand five hundred miles—and from the great

\* The thanks of the author are due to the Rev. Drs. Carroll, Rose, Dewart, and Withrow for materials used in this chapter.



lakes to the frozen ocean—a distance of about one thousand four hundred miles. This area comprises nearly one third of the North American continent, and possesses a population of about four millions of souls.

**The Mission in Newfoundland.**—Methodism was first established in this oldest and easternmost of the British colonies in 1765, and thence made its way westward and northward.

For years this island was kept as a sort of royal preserve, for the sake of its game and its fisheries, and what few population settled there were chiefly “squatters,” among whom poverty, ignorance, and irreligion prevailed.

In 1764 Laurence Coughlan, one of Wesley’s Irish itinerants, along with some others, was ordained by the Syrian Bishop Erasmus; from whom it is in some quarters asserted that Wesley himself received episcopal consecration. In consequence of this, he was put away from the Methodist Connection. He the following year left England without any especial authority, and went over to preach among the little fishing hamlets on the shores of Newfoundland.

**Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.**—The first Methodists in the province of Nova Scotia emigrated from Yorkshire, England, in 1771. They settled, some in Cumberland and some in Halifax, where they held the little meetings to which they had been accustomed at home. In 1779 these little meetings resulted in the conversion of William Black, before mentioned; an English youth from Huddersfield, who at the age of nineteen commenced his ministry in Nova Scotia, and out of the fruits of a great revival which attended his preaching organized several large Societies.

Black soon became one of the most successful heralds of the Gospel. From Nova Scotia he extended his labors into the adjacent province of New Brunswick, in which there were a few scattered villages along the shores of the Bay of Fundy; and in 1784, feeling the necessity of assistance in his wide circuit, he made a journey to Baltimore on the occasion of the famous Christmas Conference; passing through Boston on his route, where he stopped and preached several times with excellent effect. At the Christmas Conference Freeborn Garrettson, a famous organizer and preacher, the first Presiding Elder of the New York District, and James O. Cromwell, were appointed to return with



Black and assist him on his distant field, which the next year was extended westward as far as to the river St. John, in New Brunswick.

For years after the first Conference in British America, in 1786, the titles and usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church prevailed in the Colonial Societies; but the war of the Revolution wrought an estrangement between these brethren, and after the superannuation of William Black, some time about 1792, the fashions of British Methodism began to prevail, and after the year 1800 the eastern Provinces were principally supplied with preachers from England, this territory being organized under the name of the Conference of Eastern British America, in which relation it continued until 1874.

**Methodism in Western Canada** was of American origin. There were, it is said, some Methodist soldiers in the army of Gen. Wolfe, at Quebec, who held meetings in their camps and barracks as early as the year 1763, thus antedating by about three years the planting of Methodism by Embury in New York. In 1774 Embury, Paul Heck, and other Palatine emigrants, with their families, exchanged their home in New York for one in Upper Canada, or what is now the Province of Quebec; but after a residence of four years in the vicinity of Montreal they removed to Canada West—now Ontario—and settled in the township of Augusta, where they established a Methodist class. From time to time these classes in the various British provinces were re-enforced by parties of Loyalists, or Tories, who, in spite of the Declaration of Independence, still maintained their allegiance to the British Crown. Quite a colony of these emigrants settled in the Bay of Quinte country; and in 1787 George Neal, a local preacher from the Southern States, sought a home on the Canada side of the Niagara River, where he preached with great efficiency and gathered another class.

At first the Methodist Societies in Upper Canada formed a part of the New York Conference, which, after the fashion of those early times, had a boundary on the south, but extended indefinitely northward just as far as the preacher chose to travel. In 1790 William Losee received an appointment as Conference Missionary "to range at large," and, being of Tory proclivities and having friends in Canada, he ranged off to the north-east, performing his journey on foot, with the occasional help of a canoe, and preached along the settlements of the



Upper St. Lawrence River with such good effect that when he returned to his Conference, which sat in New York, in October, 1791, it was with a numerously signed petition asking for his regular appointment to that region; and for the years 1791-92 the name of Losée appears in the "Minutes" in connection with Kingston. He was a powerful man, especially in exhortation, and his zeal and activity knew no bounds. During this year on the Kingston Circuit he organized five classes and gathered one hundred and sixty-five members, which suc-



LOSEE TRAVELING HIS CANADA CIRCUIT.

cess led to his re-appointment, accompanied by the Rev. Darius Dunham, who traveled the western and Losée the eastern of the two circuits which then comprised the whole of Upper Canada.

In 1791 the Methodist membership in Canada was reported at two thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, with thirteen preachers; and for about twenty years this territory was included either in the New York, the Philadelphia, the New England, or the Genesee Conference.

**Henry Ryan and the Ryanites.**—The Presiding Elder appointed to the Upper Canada District in 1805 was Henry Ryan, a Scotch-Irishman by descent, but born in Connecticut. He was a man of



splendid powers both physical and spiritual—who had entered the itinerant ministry five years before, in the prime of his youth, being then about twenty-five years of age. He was prodigiously strong, and his quickness and courage were equal to his strength, for all of which endowments his itinerant life on the frontiers gave him ample use. His voice is described as flexible, musical, and of fabulous compass. His conversational tone would reach the outskirts of any ordinary congregation, though it was pleasant, and not over loud; but when he “lifted up his voice” it was like the roar of a lion.

Elijah Hedding—afterward Bishop—with whom he was a junior preacher in 1802, describes him as “a very pious man, a man of great love for the cause of Christ, of great zeal in his work as a minister, a brave Irishman, and a man who labored as if the judgment thunders were to follow each sermon. He was sometimes overbearing in the administration of discipline, but with that exception he performed his duties in every part of his work as a minister of Christ as faithfully as any man I ever knew.”

The period of Ryan’s Presiding Eldership on the Upper Canada District, like that of Black in Nova Scotia, was of quite unusual length, covering a period of about fourteen years, till the organization of the Canada Annual Conference in 1824. Ryan remained in Canada through the War of 1812, being a Briton by ancestry and by preference, though by birth he was a citizen of the Republic, and during those troublous times he was the recognized head of Methodism in Upper Canada. He traveled the whole range of country from Montreal indefinitely northward, called out Canadian preachers to supply the work, and held at least three Annual Conferences on his own authority, at which he occupied the chair of the Bishop.

For some years after the war there was a strenuous movement in Canada to bring about a separation from the American Church, which, in 1824, led to the organization of the Canada Conference, and four years afterward to the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada. To this movement Elder Ryan lent himself with characteristic vehemence; but its progress was too slow to suit his impetuous nature, and, having no great love for the brethren across the border, he withdrew from their fellowship in 1827, only a year before the separation which he sought was accomplished. In 1829 he and a few



like-minded agitators organized what was called the Canadian Wesleyan Church, whose chief differences from the parent body were lay delegation and the right of local preachers to a seat in Conference. This organization held together for ten years, when a minority returned to the old Church, and the others formed a union with the Methodist New Connection of England, and ultimately with the Methodist Church of Canada, in 1874.

**William Case, the Father of Canadian Missions.**

—The colleague of Henry Ryan on the Bay of Quinte Circuit in



WILLIAM CASE.

Canada in 1805 was William Case, then a young man of twenty five, a native of Massachusetts, a man of deep piety, and destined to a memorable career. He was ordained by Bishop Asbury, and the first six years of his ministry were spent under the direction of the New York Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Thereafter for a period of seventeen years—from 1810 to 1828—he held the post of Presiding Elder in Canada; he and Ryan being the two chief administrators of Upper Canadian Methodism. In the latter year Case was



appointed Superintendent of Indian Missions and Schools, which schools and missions largely owed their existence to his labors in the time which he had saved from his work among the whites.

He had a fatherly way of talking about "my boys," and the young preachers thus designated responded by calling him "Father Case." Little children loved him, which is the same as saying that every body loved him. Even the little Indians were glad to see him, and would literally "pluck his gown to share the good man's smile;" nor did they fail of their object, for he treated them with the same kindness and affection as if they had been of a lighter hue. Before devoting himself to the Indian missions he was a popular preacher. He did not excel in exposition or in doctrine, but he had a way of his own in treating historical subjects and portraying domestic scenes, by which he would make his oratorical pictures seem almost real; and he possessed a pathetic style and a musical voice not unlike the softer tones of the Indians themselves, which gave his addresses a peculiar persuasiveness with them. He was also a sweet singer, and by means of his delightful songs he greatly promoted the progress of his ministry. By his singing he even found his way into the families of some intelligent Romanists, some members whereof were brought to a saving knowledge of Christ.

His career among the Indians seemed to be a providential one, and his pursuit of it was for years the great inspiration and passion of his life. The aboriginal tribes which hung on the outskirts of civilization in the British provinces, especially the Chippeway tribe, were a most degraded and besotted race—ignorant, indolent, improvident, filthy, drunken, and licentious to the last degree. No one hoped for their improvement, or even thought it to be possible; but Case, in his frequent journeys through the land, had often revolved their wretched condition in his mind; and when one Peter Jones, a half-breed Indian youth, was converted at a camp-meeting in 1823, Case broke out with the exclamation, "Bless God, the door is now open to the Indian tribes!"

With Peter Jones for an interpreter, Case opened his labors among the red men at Belleville, Rice Lake, Mud Lake, St. Clair, etc.; and soon a revival of religion swept throughout the length and breadth of the Indian settlements, in which hundreds of red men and women



were brought to Christ. Thenceforth Case cut loose from the whites, and became a devotee to his Indian work.

A pleasant story is told of an interview between him and Bishop George in the United States, whither Case had gone to beg money for his Indian Mission. At the close of his call the Bishop invited Case to offer prayer, and he at once began to pray for the "poor Indian" until he literally broke down with emotion. Recovering himself, he began to pray for the Indians again, and kept on in that strain, till the Bishop said, "I thought he had forgotten that white men had souls at all." Like Dr. Coke, his great missionary exemplar, Case solicited missionary money from house to house both in the United States and Canada. There were no missionary meetings in those days; the whole matter being left to fitful, spontaneous effort; and the financial part of his labors consumed a large proportion of his time.

Father Case and his missionaries rightfully earned the name of "laborers" in the Lord's vineyard, for one part of their task consisted in working with their hands to teach the Indians agriculture and the mechanic arts, as well as to raise food for themselves and families, and to build mission houses and chapels. They very soon acquired the Indian independence of civilization, and learned how to forage for themselves in their long journeys on foot or through the wilderness. A pack inclosed in a blanket slung on the back, and a gun with a small store of powder and shot, and a small Bible, constituted the Indian preacher's outfit; and, thus entering into the lives of the people for whom they were laboring, they were all the more successful in bringing them to a knowledge of the truth.

**Case's Jubilee Sermon**, preached by the request of the Canada Wesleyan Conference, at London, C. W., on the 6th of June, 1855, mentions the names of Seth Crawford, Thomas Whitehead, Edmond Stone, and Alvin Torry, as his early fellow-laborers of his own race, with Thomas Davis, Peter Jones, and John Sunday as their chief Indian assistants.

"The first Canadian Missionary Society," he says, "was formed on the Niagara District, in 1822, and soon these societies were multiplied and extended throughout the province; their first enterprise being the support of the missionaries at the head of Lake Ontario; afterward among the six nations of Indians on the Grand River; and thence to



the scattered tribes of the Ojibways, who lived along the lakes and rivers in the wilderness of Upper Canada. At first the prejudices of the Indians were very strong against the missionaries, but kindness and honesty at length prevailed over their surly and suspicious natures; the good Spirit also accompanied their work, and the Indians were brought to believe the 'good book,' to allow the missionaries the privilege of teaching their children, and ultimately to accept not only the Gospel of Christ, but the civilization which its progress implies."

Peter Jones, the Indian preacher, gives the following account of the introduction of Christianity among the Ojibways, at Rice Lake:—

"During the Methodist Conference at Hamilton, near Coburg, in September, 1827, several of the converted Indians from Grape Island, and others of us from River Credit, met at the Conference by direction of Father Case. The Indians pitched their wigwams in a grove. Here religious services were held. During this time Chief Sawyer, Big Jacob, and others were sent to Rice Lake to invite the Indians to come down to our encampment. Next morning they returned, accompanied by Captain Paudaush and Peter Rice-Lake, the two chiefs, and thirty or forty others. After refreshments we commenced religious 'talk;' we told them what great things the Great Spirit had done for us at the Credit and Grape Island, to which they all paid great attention and seemed much impressed. During the same day Bishop Hedding, Father Case, Dr. Bangs, and other ministers, visited and addressed the Indians, and prayers and religious instruction were continued till toward evening, the Indians becoming more and more deeply impressed.

"At length the Spirit of the Lord was poured out in great power on the minds of the Indians, and many cried aloud, 'What shall I do to be saved?' That we might have more convenience for giving them instruction an altar was formed by placing a pole against two trees. To this place the mourning penitents were invited to come and kneel for instruction and prayer, and instruction was given them as their several cases seemed to require. It was not long when Chiefs Rice-Lake and Paudaush arose and expressed their joyful feelings, saying they had found peace to their souls; and they gave glory to God for his mercy. Then another and another gave the same testimony, and ere the meeting closed every adult Indian was made happy in the par-



doning love of God. O what a joyful time! The wilderness resounded with the voice of joy and gladness.

"On the return of the Rice-Lake converts to their home, Captain Beaver and others from Grape Island were requested to accompany them, for the purpose of further instruction and edification in the Christian faith.

"The following occurrence will show the nature of the temptations the Indians had now to encounter, the device of the *white pagans* to ensnare them, and the firm resistance they showed against their two grand enemies, the *drunkard and rum*.

"One of these disciples of whisky was '*sure* he could induce the Indians again to drink,' and, providing himself with ardent spirits, he moved in his canoe over to the island where the Indians were encamped. Leaving all at the shore, he went up to the camp, and, inviting the Indians down, brought forth his bottle. 'Come,' said he, 'we always good friends; we once more take a good drink in friendship.'

"'No,' said Captain Paudaush, 'we drink no more of the fire-waters.'

"'O, but you will drink with me; we always good friends.' But while this son of Belial was urging them to drink, the Indians struck up in the tune of *Walsal* the new hymn they had lately learned to sing:

"O uh pa-gish ke che ingo' dwok,  
Neej uh ne she nah baig:"

"O for a thousand tongues, to sing  
My great Redeemer's praise:"

and while they were singing, this bacchanalian, defeated in his wicked device, and looking like a *fool*, paddled away from the island, leaving the Indians to their temperance and their religious devotions."

In summing up the results of his thirty years' missionary work Father Case exclaims: "Since our remembrance tribes and nations have been converted, increasing the ranks of the Church by thousands, and strengthening her for further warfare and certain conquest. During the thirty years of our missionary labors among the wild men of our forests fourteen bands of wandering pagans have been converted; people degraded in ignorance, and besotted by strong drink, without



either house or domestic animals. These have been instructed in the Christian religion, gathered into villages, provided with dwellings of comfort, and taught the duties of domestic life. Two noble institutions have been erected and are now in operation, the one at Alnwick, near Coburg, the other at Mount Elgin, near London, on the River Thames, in which the Indian youth are taught the common branches of English education, as well as agriculture on the farms attached to the schools. At each of these establishments provision is made for the board and clothing of fifty young Indians. Our Church has now (1855) in the mission field twenty-one missionaries to the Indians, seventy-nine ministers to the domestic missions, sixteen day-school teachers, fifteen day-schools, two of which are large industrial institutions, and 10,624 members; 1,142 of that number are Indians."

The death of William Case occurred on the 19th of October, 1855.

**War and Peace—Declension and Revival.**—In 1812, before the breaking out of the war between England and the United States, the number of Methodist members in Canada was 2,250. At the close of the war, three years afterward, there was found to have been a decrease of 785 in Canada, and also a decrease in the Church of the United States of more than ten thousand. With the return of peace the Societies again began to prosper, and in June 1816, at the session of the Genesee Annual Conference, which was held at Elizabethtown, a great awakening commenced under a sermon by Bishop George, and before the close of the session it is believed that over a hundred souls were awakened. This revival spread in waves of power and blessing until the shores of Lake Ontario, the Niagara, and the St. Lawrence became vocal with prayer and praise. There were not ministers enough to conduct all the services, but hundreds of people would assemble for prayer-meeting, sometimes on one side of the lake or rivers and sometimes on the other; the people crossing in boat-loads to be the helpers of each others' joy, and making the woods and waters echo with the music of their hymns as they rowed from shore to shore. In this revival a new impetus was given to the work in Canada which has continued to prosper since that day.

**British Wesleyanism in Canada.**—During the war, while hostilities were raging on the lakes and frontiers, it was no easy matter for the New York, the New England, or the Genesee Confer-





METROPOLITAN WESLEYAN CHURCH, TORONTO.



ences to find among their numbers men suited to the Canadian circuits, since politics were sure to creep more or less into the spirit, if not into the forms, of prayers and sermons. Thus it was that in 1814 the Society at Quebec sent to England for a minister, and in response to their call the Rev. John Strong arrived in Quebec in June of that same year. The Montreal Society was divided, but the majority went over to British Wesleyanism, which sent out the Rev. Richard Williams to the Montreal Circuit, and the Rev. Mr. Burch, the American preacher, who had stayed at his post during the war, took his departure just as the Wesleyan "missionaries" arrived.

Williams and Strong commenced operations on the St. Francis River and in other parts of Lower Canada, in the fields hitherto occupied by the American preachers, and they insisted upon holding the chapel in Montreal in view of the fact that the money which built it had been mostly collected in England. They also extended their operations up into Western or Upper Canada, where the American party prevailed, and located at Cornwall, Kingston, York, Niagara, and about the Bay of Quinte. Thus, instead of maintaining their character as missionaries, they entered into the choicest portions of the work already laid out, with the evident purpose of dispossessing the Americans of the entire Canadian field. This was the occasion of no little controversy, and in order to adjust the difficulties which were continually arising, and to make an end of strife, an agreement was entered into between the British and American Conferences in 1820, to the effect that the English missionaries should withdraw from Upper Canada, and the American preachers from Lower Canada: thus, like Lot and Abraham, dividing the country between them.

**Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada.**—But this compact was destined to a short life. There were many Methodists in Upper Canada who did not desire to remain under the American jurisdiction, and to meet their views the expedient of a Canadian Annual Conference was tried; but after four years this was found to be too close a bond with their republican neighbors, and in 1828 the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada was organized. This new Church could hardly be called a secession, since Canadian Methodism had never held other than a voluntary connection with the Methodism of the States, and all the preachers who had been sent across the line



had been sent as volunteers. There was, therefore, no obstacle in the way of the organization of this new Church, and no theological root of bitterness underneath which might afterward spring up to trouble them. The Conference at which this peaceful separation was arranged was presided over by Bishop Hedding, who, when the resolutions of division had been passed, proposed to vacate the chair, as he was no longer in fact their chairman, by virtue of his office as Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States; but so fraternal was the spirit of the assembly that he was urged to continue in the chair during the remainder of the session; and, in place of a Bishop, William Case was elected as "General Superintendent *pro tem.*" Thus amicably was severed the connection between the two bodies, and the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada started out alone.

**State Churchism in Canada.**—The Canadas now had a legislature of their own, but their Governors were sent out to them from England. As a matter of course, these Governors, with their families and followers, were all members of the Established Church, no other communion in England being thought either able or worthy to furnish the public service with any high functionary; and this fact was eagerly taken advantage of by the Episcopalians in Canada to secure for themselves a pre-eminence similar to that enjoyed by the State Church in England. The High-church colonists, with the Governor at their head, set up the pretense that the Church of England was the legally established religion in Canada, by virtue of the fact that Canada was a British province—a claim which the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans all united to oppose. The laws of the province did not permit any except a Church of England minister to solemnize matrimony, and there were various other restraints thrown around the "Dissenters," against which they were continually protesting.

The exigencies of politics led the Colonial Government to court the influence of the Methodists, who were the strongest and foremost enemies of Colonial State-Churchism; but, unfortunately, there was a division among the Methodists themselves; some of them being loyal in their devotion to every thing British, including British Wesleyanism, while others were more progressive in their views, and were inclined to follow certain American examples. The managers of the



conservative, or British party, which still had control of the Government, were quick to take advantage of this division, and an effort was made to win over the conservative wing of the Methodists to their support. It was suggested to them, that as loyal Methodists they were in reality neither more nor less than a branch of the Church of England, both at home and abroad, and it was hinted, that as such they might expect a share of the funds reserved by the Provincial Government for the support of the regular clergy in case they should make common cause with the Church-and-State party.

In 1828 the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, sent home a dispatch requesting that English Methodist preachers might again be sent to Upper Canada, and recommending that aid should be given to their Indian missions out of the public funds. The British Wesleyan Conference, before which this proposal was laid, had always been a thoroughly loyal body, and it was quite the thing to be looked for that they should accede to the Governor's proposal. They were not well pleased that Methodism in Canada should have an American instead of a British form of organization, though hitherto they had no opportunity of protesting against the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada: now, however, they called to mind that the compact of 1820, by which Canada East was given to the English and Canada West to the American Methodists, had not been made with the Methodist *Episcopal* Church of Canada, this being a subsequent organization; hence they assumed the nullity of the compact, the more readily, perhaps, as on their part it had been only partly fulfilled.\*

Meanwhile the Upper Canada Episcopal Methodists were without a Bishop of their own: such ordinations as were had, of elders and deacons, being performed by Bishop Hedding, who visited their Conference in 1830. Three men had been elected to their vacant bishopric, but had declined the place. The first of these was Nathan Bangs, a member of the New York Conference, who from 1802 till 1808 had traveled a Canada circuit and laid the foundation of his future fame. He was a native of Connecticut, converted in the great revival of 1800; and after his return from Canada, where his quality had been abundantly tested, he entered upon a career of leadership in the Church which embraced some of the chief offices in its gift. To

\* See WEBSTER'S "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada," p. 250.



THE FALLS OF NIAGARA, FROM THE CANADA SIDE.





become the Bishop of the Canada Church implied the surrender of his nationality, and Bangs, who doubtless already felt within him the prophecy of large success among his own people, put aside the honor which his Canadian brethren proffered him. They next elected Wilbur Fisk, who was at that time the Principal of the Wesleyan Academy, Wilbraham, Massachusetts, an eminent preacher and scholar, and one of the most saintly men ever produced in America.

The judgment of the Canadians was excellent, but their efforts were not successful. A third candidate was then brought forward; the Rev. Mr. Stratton, one of their own preachers, who, following the example of Bangs and Fisk, still left the Canadian episcopacy vacant; so Father Case, their patriarch and favorite, continued to preside over them with the modest title of "Superintendent *pro tem.*"

**The Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada again.**

—The changes brought about in 1833, by certain "Articles of Union" arranged between the British Conference and the Rev. Mr. Ryerson, on behalf of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in British North America, soon produced an outbreak, partly because local preachers were by its operation denied ordination, on the ground that it was not only contrary to Methodism, but to Christian wisdom in general, that persons continuing in secular life should carry ministerial orders and titles, and partly because the ministry had assumed the privilege of forming the union without proper consultation with the Societies. In one or two instances the preachers sent by the newly re-organized Conference were rejected by the Churches to which they were appointed, on the ground that the pulpits were the property of "The Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada," while these ministers appeared in the name of a body which they did not recognize, namely, "The Wesleyan Methodist Church in British North America." For the most part, however, the laity quietly accepted the action of their ministers; many, indeed, enthusiastically supported it; thus the chapels and "Mission-Houses," or parsonages, after several suits in the courts of law, were retained by the old Church under its new name, and the financial outlook for the adherents of episcopacy was any thing but hopeful.

In order to maintain the legal life of the organization which had been voted out of existence, the episcopal party determined to hold the Annual Conference as usual for the year 1834, which body, claim-



ing to be the rightful Conference of the "Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada," assembled on the 25th of June, at Cummer's Church, near Toronto, whereat there appeared only three regularly ordained elders, to wit, Joseph Gatchell, David Culp, and Daniel Pickett, and J. W. Byam, deacon. These, with a number of local preachers who were in attendance, re-organized the Conference; elected the Rev. John Reynolds "Superintendent *pro tem.*," in the room of Father Case; received several ministerial candidates from the ranks of the local preachers; re-arranged the circuits, on which, however, almost every place of worship had passed out of their hands; and thus, with a courage that was admirable, whatever may be said of their wisdom, set themselves to the almost hopeless task of contending, on British territory, and in spite of British power and prestige, for a form of Church government widely different from all the rest of British Methodism, but which was, doubtless, the form contemplated by the great leader whose name their English brethren continued to bear.

The next step was to elect a Bishop. For this purpose a special session of what was called "The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada" was held at Trafalgar Meeting-house, on the 25th of June, 1835; which General Conference consisted of five men, to wit: the Rev. John Reynolds, General Superintendent *pro tem.*, David Culp, Joseph Gatchell, Daniel Pickett, and John H. Huston, the last-named being a traveling deacon, and the others local preachers in elders' orders. The election of Bishop resulted in the choice of the Rev. John Reynolds, who, on Sunday, June 28th, 1835, was ordained to the episcopal office by the other four ministers comprising the Conference. The Church over which he was to preside at this time reported 21 preachers, including those on trial, and a membership of 1,243, being about one twelfth of the original body whose successors they claimed to be.

At the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States held in Cincinnati, in 1836, fraternal delegates appeared from both the Canada Churches, and a stormy debate ensued as to which of the two should be recognized as the rightful heirs of the original Canadian Methodist body; but the General Conference, taking into account the excitement under which they spoke, treated them with all courtesy, referred the whole question to a committee,



which reported in favor of recognizing the body then in connection with the British Wesleyan Conference.

Then followed litigation over Church property, which failed not of its usual effects; for whatever might be the merits of any particular



ALBERT COLLEGE.

cause, both the plaintiff and defendant were certain to come out of the trial with a very poor opinion of one another. These trials resulted in the confirmation of the title of the Wesleyan Church to the property which they claimed, and the Episcopal body, being now literally out of doors, were compelled to begin their Church enterprises over again. In spite of their poverty, however, they had the satisfaction of seeing their numbers increase, for at the Conference of the ensuing year they reported 24 preachers and a membership of 2,390—an increase of 1,147 members in a single year. In 1838 the body comprised 32 preachers and 4,177 members, and from that time to the present they have advanced in numbers and wealth until at the Conference of 1878 they reported 3 Annual Conferences, namely: Niagara, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte, comprising 267 ministers, a membership of 27,285, 516 churches, 128 parsonages, and 2 collegiate institutions—the Albert University, at Belleville, of which the Rev. J. R. Jacques, D.D., Ph.D., is President, and Professor of Ancient Languages; and Alma College, at St. Thomas, a new enterprise not yet fully in operation. They have also a Church paper, "The Canada Christian Advocate," published at Hamilton, Ontario, a paper of deservedly high reputation; where the Book Room of the denomination is also located; the Rev.



S. G. Stone, D.D., holding the very honorable positions both of Editor and Book Agent.

Thus the little band which in 1835 started out in ecclesiastical life with nothing but their theories, their courage, and their faith, has become a strongly-established body, with an active and increasing membership, and Church property estimated to be worth nearly a million and a quarter of dollars.

**The Canadian Episcopacy.**—The Rev. John Reynolds, the first Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, was born near Hudson, N. Y., in 1786, and removed to Canada with his parents when only ten years old. He was converted in 1803 under the labors of Nathan Bangs, and five years afterward was admitted on trial in the New York Conference, which, as has been seen, comprised at that time the whole of Western Canadian Methodism. He was one of Elder Ryan's assistants during the War of 1812, at the close of which, on account of failing health, he returned to secular life.

At the Hallowell Conference, in 1824, he was ordained elder by Bishop George, and being from the first opposed to the plan of union with the British Wesleyans, he naturally became the leader of the little company who established the present Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church in 1835. His ordination as Bishop, though not by regular succession, was performed in the manner indicated in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which provides for the consecration of a Bishop by three elders in case the regular Episcopal succession should ever fail. Bishop Reynolds died in 1857, and the Rev. John Alley, who had been elected in 1845, became the senior Bishop. In 1847 the Rev. Philander Smith was elected to the Episcopacy, and he in turn was succeeded in 1856 by the Rev. James Richardson, D.D.

**Bishop Richardson,** at the time of the last Methodist revolution, was one of the leading ministers. He was born in Kingston, Upper Canada, January 29, 1791, and spent his youth as a sailor on the lakes, in which capacity he served in the British navy in 1812. He was converted in 1817, entered the Canadian itinerancy in 1825, and went over to British Wesleyanism with the great body of his Church in 1833; but subsequently becoming dissatisfied, he removed to the United States, from whence he at length returned to Canada



in the capacity of Agent of the Canada Bible Society, which office he held for eleven years, being meanwhile a local minister in the Canada Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1858 this body elected and consecrated him to the office of Bishop, in which he died, in the year 1875, at the advanced age of eighty-four years.



BISHOP CARMAN.

**Bishop Carman.**—After Bishop Richardson's retirement from labor, in 1874, the Rev. J. Morrison Reid, D.D., then Missionary Secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was elected to succeed him, but on his declination of the office, the Rev. Albert Carman, D.D., the present Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada, was elected, after having served in its ministry for eighteen years. He is a native of Canada, a graduate of Victoria College, ex-professor of mathematics in Belleville Seminary, and ex-President of Albert College, from which institution, after long and successful service as professor, principal, and president, he was promoted to the highest office in the gift of his Church. In 1860 he received the degree of Master of Arts, and the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1874. He is now in the full prime of his life, having been born in 1833.



**Rev. Egerton Ryerson.**—This Methodist statesman and divine, whose name will be held in grateful remembrance both by his own Church and by all lovers of free education, was born in the town of Woodhouse, Upper Canada, in 1803. He was converted in early life, and followed two of his elder brothers into the ministry of the Methodist Church. His name has already been mentioned in connection with Indian missions, in which he rendered good service during a part of his early ministry, and also in connection with the delicate and responsible post of Commissioner to the British Conference to arrange



REV. EGERTON RYERSON, D.D., LL.D.

the terms of union therewith. During his first years of service as an itinerant preacher he developed remarkable talents for writing, especially controversial writing, and for many years his pen found active service in defending the Methodists against High-church pretensions, and vindicating the cause of popular education against its Romish assailants. He was the first editor of "The Christian Guardian"—the organ of the Canada Conference—which was commenced in 1829. In 1842 he was appointed the first President of Victoria College. From



this position he was called, in 1845, to accept the office of chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, which post he has held for a period of over thirty years, with the approval of all the diverse governments and parties, greatly to the advancement of the cause of popular education, and to the honor of himself and his Church.

In 1874 the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada, the latest form of Methodism in British America, elected Dr. Ryerson as its first President. In his inaugural speech on the occasion he makes mention of the fact that his long life has been also a stormy one. His office brought him into almost constant conflict with Romish priests, who set themselves against his theory of common school education with all the rhetoric and all the votes at their command, and his controversial writings on this subject alone cover thousands of printed pages, and furnish some of the strongest and most clearly-stated arguments to be found in the whole range of educational literature in defense of the education of all the children of the State under the direction of the State and at the expense of the State.\*

Dr. Ryerson has twice represented the Canadian Wesleyans in the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, first in 1844, second in 1868. Besides his voluminous controversial writing he has published several works for the use of public schools, including a "Manual of Agricultural Chemistry," "Elements of Political Economy," etc.

In consideration of his long and valuable services Dr. Ryerson was recently retired by the Government on full pay, retaining also his title as Minister of Public Instruction, and the privilege of exercising his functions at pleasure. His office and desk in the Department of Public Instruction at Toronto are still reserved for his occasional use, and the grand old hero of so many combats and victories in the name of free religion and free education is one of the most beloved as well as honored men in the whole Canadian Dominion.

\* The author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to the Hon. J. George Hodgins, M.L.D., Deputy Minister of Public Instruction at Toronto, the associate and successor of Dr. Ryerson, for copies of pamphlets in which the above-mentioned memorable controversies have been published; as well as for his special report on the "Ontario Educational Exhibit" at the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia. The educational head-quarters at Toronto, projected by Dr. Ryerson and brought to their present state of efficiency by Dr. Hodgins, indicate the completeness and thoroughness of the plans of these educational administrators, which entitle them to the foremost rank in that important line of public service.



**Conference of Eastern British America.**—The labors of Coughlan in Newfoundland, and of William Black—"Bishop Black," as he was sometimes called—in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, have already been mentioned. Previous to the year 1800 a majority of the Methodist circuits in the Lower Provinces were supplied from the New York and New England Conferences, but after that date most of the preachers were sent out by the British Wesleyan Missionary Society. After the division of Canadian Methodism into the two sections, the Eastern and Western, an agreement was entered into between these bodies and the Methodist Episcopal Church, that neither should send its preachers across the line which separated the two nations without the consent of the other; a compact which was essential to the peace and quietness of the Canadian Societies, but which built up a wall of separation between the two portions of American Methodism that had been blessed with a common history.

The Conference of Eastern British America had fewer bonds of union with the Church in the United States than that of Upper or Western Canada, and was, perhaps, more thoroughly British in its method and spirit. It, however, was borne along with the march of events, and in 1874 entered the Methodist Confederation, which now comprises the majority of British American Methodism.

**The Methodist Church of Canada** received its present name and form in 1874, on the occasion of the union of the Wesleyans, the New Connection, and the Wesleyan Conferences of Eastern British America.

Essential changes had been going on in the country. Instead of separate provinces they had become a Confederation, with less of British authority over them; and this political union naturally suggested a union of different sections of Canada Methodists and a larger independence of British control. The discipline of this body, so far as it relates to the internal affairs of the Societies, remains unchanged. The six Annual Conferences into which the whole work has been divided, namely: the Toronto, London, Montreal, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward's Island and Newfoundland Conferences are composed exclusively of ministers. There is also a quadrennial General Conference after the manner of the Methodist Episcopal Church, composed of an equal number of ministers, and



laymen, and its president, whose term of office covers the entire four years from one Conference to another, is the highest officer in the Connection. The manner of stationing and ordaining preachers is copied from the British Wesleyan Conference, but there is, as might be expected, a much larger degree of elasticity and freedom in the general management of affairs.

**Statistics.**—At the time the above-mentioned union was effected, the membership of the United Church was 102,178, with 733 ministers, since which time its progress has been rapid, the statistics of 1878 showing a membership of 122,605; 1,165 itinerant ministers; 3,589 local preachers; and 1,783 Sunday-schools. The annual income of the Canadian Missionary Society is over \$140,000, being an average of considerably more than a dollar per member; a showing which is greatly to the credit of the Canadians, who in this respect outshine their neighbors in the States.

The Missionary Society of this Missionary Church has already planted 409 stations, dotting the whole country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and stretching far up into the great Hudson Bay Territory toward the frozen north. There are at present about 40,000 missionary Church members under the care of 430 missionary pastors, a considerable proportion of which work is among the Indians and half-breeds; that class of people with whom the Republic has had so much trouble, but who, having from the first been regarded by the Canadians as human beings, with souls to be saved, have steadily improved in the arts of civilization as well as in peace and piety. This Society has also extended its missions to the West Indies and Japan, though the enormous extent of its home territory would seem to give sufficient exercise for its evangelizing work.

The total value of the Church property of this body, as reported at the General Conference of 1878, was \$5,922,207; the value of property in educational institutions and endowments was \$315,000.

**Colleges and Schools.**—The principal educational institution of the Methodist Church in Canada is the Victoria University, at Coburg, Ontario, under the presidency of Rev. S. S. Nelles, D.D., LL.D., who also occupies the Chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy. Dr. Nelles is a native Canadian, a graduate of the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Conn., in the class of 1846, a man of delightful



personal-qualities and a deeply read classical scholar. The faculty of the University comprises eight professors in the Collegiate Department, four in its Law Faculty, and four in its School of Theology, besides the president, whose abundant labors extend to this department also. It has an affiliated relation with the Medical Colleges in Montreal and Toronto; thus covering all the great fields of professional education.

Since the organization of the School of Theology, in 1871, it has trained 162 students for the Christian ministry, 112 of whom have entered the Methodist ministry in Canada. The number of graduates in all departments up to 1879 was 205, and the whole number of graduates in all departments was 1,195.

**The Wesleyan Theological College**, at Montreal, was founded in 1873, as a training school for ministers among the French-speaking population, especially in the Province of Quebec. It has about twenty students, and property to the value of \$30,000.

**Mt. Allison Wesleyan College and Academies.**—Mt. Allison, in Sackville, New Brunswick, is the seat of a system of Methodist schools which have grown up around the Wesleyan Male Academy, established by the late Charles T. Allison, Esq., in 1843, who, under a distinct impression of duty, set apart the sum of \$20,000, on condition that a like amount should be raised by the Church at large, for the education of the children of Methodist parents.

The first principal of the Academy, under whose administration it grew to a college, was the Rev. Humphrey Pickard, D.D., a native of Fredericton, New Brunswick, and a graduate of Wesleyan University of the class of 1839. To his courage, persistence, administrative ability, and fervent piety, this now flourishing institution owes its safe passage through the long period of its financial struggle for life. It now comprises the Mount Allison Wesleyan College, a male and female academy, and is affiliated with the University of Halifax, through which institution its scholastic degrees are conferred. The President of the College is Rev. J. R. Inch, LL.D., who is assisted in the literary and theological department by a corps of six professors. Its trustees are appointed by the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada.

**The Staff of Canada Methodism.**—The Rev. George Douglas, LL.D., Principal of the Wesleyan Theological College of



Montreal, and now (1879) the President of the Canada General Conference, was born in Scotland in 1826, and was converted in Montreal, to which place his family removed while he was a youth. At the age of twenty-two he was admitted into the Canadian Wesleyan ministry, in which he filled the important stations at Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, and Montreal. At the first session of the General Conference, in 1874, Dr. Ryerson was elected President and Dr. Douglas



REV. GEORGE DOUGLAS, LL.D.

Vice-president; his present office is, therefore, in some sense a regular official succession. Its functions, however, are limited to what may be called honorary services, the actual working powers of the Church being chiefly wielded by Conference Secretaries and Committees.

**Rev. Alexander Sutherland, D.D.**, the Secretary of the General Conference, is a leading spirit of Canadian Methodism.



He is a man in the full prime of his ample powers, having been born of Scottish parents in the town of Guelph, Upper Canada, in 1833. Soon after his conversion he began to exercise his gifts as a preacher, and in 1855 was received as a candidate for the ministry of the Wesleyan Church. As a student in Victoria College, which he entered in 1858, he gave promise of future usefulness; and after filling some of the chief pulpits of his denomination in Hamilton, Toronto, and Montreal, he was, in 1871, elected Secretary of his Conference, which then embraced the western portion of Canada. In 1872, in conjunction with the Rev. Dr. Sanderson, he represented his Church at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at Brooklyn; and in 1874, at the first General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada, he was elected Missionary Secretary, as the associate of the venerable Dr. Enoch Wood, which position he still holds.

Dr. Sutherland is an eloquent platform speaker, a vigorous writer, a leader in debate, and an efficient man of business. In 1879 the Victoria University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

**The Rev. Enoch Wood, D.D.**—Among the early English missionaries sent out to Eastern British America was the Rev. Enoch Wood. He was born in Lincolnshire, England, in 1804, and entered the service of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in 1826. After serving for three years in the West India Missions he was transferred to the province of New Brunswick, where he labored for nineteen years. At the close of this term of service he was appointed by the British Conference Superintendent of Missions in Canada, whereupon he removed his residence to Toronto.

The older Methodists of New Brunswick still treasure the memory of his long and successful labors among them with emotions of almost filial gratitude, and recall his gentle and lovable manner and character with ever-fresh delight. It is chiefly through his faith and sagacity that the Canadian Wesleyan Missions have reached their present efficiency and extent; and, although now bending under the weight of years and labors, he is still to be found at the Missionary Rooms in Toronto, where, as Honorary Secretary, he still devotes himself to the lighter portions of the work, which he is apparently only willing to lay down with his life. In 1851 Dr. Wood was appointed Presi-



dent of the Canada Conference, as then organized, which office he held for seven consecutive years. In 1862 he was again placed in the President's chair, and at the re-organization, in 1874, he was elected the first President of the Toronto Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada.



ENOCH WOOD, D.D.

**The Rev. Edward Hartley Dewart, D.D.**, editor of "The Christian Guardian," the western organ of Canada Methodism, is, as his position implies, one of the chiefs of the Canadian ministry; the "Guardian" having for fifty years been one of the boldest and most vigorous religious newspapers published on this continent, and its editorial chair having been filled by the strongest available men.

Dr. Dewart is an Irishman by birth, but a Canadian by early adoption and hearty sympathy. He was converted at the age of fifteen, and after a sound training in the Normal School at Toronto, he entered the Wesleyan ministry in 1851, and served as an itinerant for eighteen years, until 1869, when he was elected to the position which he now fills. He is an editor born, and under his management the "Guardian"



has increased its circulation and influence; it being now recognized as the leading religious paper in the Dominion, and certain to be foremost in the advocacy of every good cause. In the department of education, social science, and theology, Dr. Dewart has published some admirable tracts and pamphlets; and especially is he a recognized leader in the temperance reform, which has recently claimed so much attention in the Church.

It is too early yet to apply any measuring lines to this vigorous, progressive, growing Methodist editor. He has already held his present position longer than any of his predecessors, and has received other honors at the hands of his brethren; having been appointed senior representative to the British Wesleyan Conference in 1873, and made a Doctor of Divinity by the Victoria University in 1879.

One of his friends thus cordially praises him: "Dr. Dewart is a man of sturdy independence and strong convictions. Too frank for diplomacy, and too honest for sophistry, he never assumes an equivocal position. In the discussion of great questions you always know where he is. He has his convictions, and he stands by them in the face of any opposition. To his advocacy, perhaps, more than to any other, is due the recent union of Canadian Methodism."

**The Rev. W. H. Withrow, M.A.**, the editor of the Canadian "Methodist Magazine," and of the Sunday-school publications of the Methodist Church of Canada, is the product of the best advantages supplied by his Church. He was a student both at Victoria College and Toronto University; traveled for some years in the Methodist New Connection, from which he was received by the Wesleyans; and in 1874 the first General Conference of the United Churches elected him Assistant Editor of the "Christian Guardian," with special charge of Sunday-school publications. On the establishment of the "Methodist Magazine," in 1875, he was intrusted with its management, to which place he was re-elected by the General Conference of 1878. Among his published writings is a "History of Canada," and an elaborate work on "The Catacombs of Rome," which is circulated extensively in Europe as well as in the United States and Canada.

**Rev. William Briggs**, who has recently succeeded the Rev. Dr. Rose as Book Steward of the Wesleyan Methodist Book Room at Toronto, was born in the North of Ireland, educated in the Colle-



giate Institute of Liverpool, of which the celebrated Dean Howson was Head Master, and after some years of mercantile life, in which he received a thorough business training, he removed to Canada, and entered the ministry of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1859.

He is still a young man, scarcely more than forty, though he has already filled some of the most important pulpits in the Connection; the last being that of the Metropolitan Church of Toronto,\* whose magnificent house of worship is, perhaps, the equal of any Methodist sanctuary in the world. The removal of Mr. Briggs from the pastor-



REV. HUMPHREY PICKARD, D.D.

ate to his present position has been criticised on account of his eminent abilities as a preacher, but as Book Steward he becomes the servant of the whole Connection instead of a single Society, and it is surely no disqualification for his office that in addition to business abilities he has also the gift of speech.

**Rev. Humphrey Pickard, D.D.**, already mentioned as the veteran educator at Mt. Allison, is the Book Steward of the Eastern

\* See cut, page 761.



section of the Church, with head-quarters at Halifax. At the close of his terms of service as Principal and President at Mt. Allison, in 1869, Dr. Pickard was appointed editor of the "Provincial Wesleyan," and Book Steward of the Wesleyan Conference, at Halifax, Nova Scotia. He was twice elected President of the Wesleyan Conference of Eastern British America, and in 1878 was, by the General Conference of the United Methodist Church of Canada, again placed in charge of the publishing interests at Halifax.

Dr. Pickard, though one of the fathers in the Church, having been born in 1813, is still able to keep step in his line of duty with the younger men, while as a preceptor, a gentleman, and a Christian, his junior brethren delight to do him honor; many of them gratefully remembering the years spent under his guidance and instruction.

**The Rev. Duncan Dunbar Currie, D.D.**, the editor of the "Provincial Wesleyan," the eastern official organ of Methodism, published at Halifax, Nova Scotia, is a native of Fredericton, New Brunswick. He entered the ministry as a member of the Conference of Eastern British America in 1853, of which he held the secretaryship for several years, and in which his labors were blessed with extensive revivals of religion. His name indicates a Scotch descent, and his position points him out as one of the chief scholars and writers of his Church.



GOING TO PRAYER-MEETING.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### STATISTICS—CONCLUSION.

THE following lithographic chart, reduced from Walker's "Statistical Atlas," published under the authority of the United States Government, to more fully illustrate the figures of the census of 1870, will be found very suggestive. Later figures are given in the tables than those to which the proportions of the colored chart are made to correspond, and they strengthen the statement in favor of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

#### GENERAL SUMMARY OF METHODISTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.\*

##### I. EPISCOPAL METHODISTS IN UNITED STATES.

	Itinerant Ministers.	Local Preachers.	Lay Members.
Methodist Episcopal.....	11,453	12,402	1,696,837
Methodist Episcopal, South.....	8,763	5,763	795,069
African Methodist Episcopal.....	1,418	3,168	214,836
Methodist Episcopal, Zion.....	1,500	2,500	190,900
Colored Methodist Episcopal.....	638	683	112,300
Evangelical Association.....	828	540	105,013
United Brethren.....	2,152	.....	152,291
Union American Methodist Episcopal.....	101	22	2,550
Total Meth. Episcopal in United States.....	21,853	25,077	3,960,738

##### II. NON-EPISCOPAL METHODISTS IN UNITED STATES.

Methodist Protestant.....	1,314	925	112,405
American Wesleyan.....	250	290	25,000
Free Methodists.....	313	233	10,682
Primitive Methodists.....	196	162	3,210
Independent Methodists.....	24	.....	12,550
Total Non-Episcopal Methodists in U. S.....	2,097	1,590	164,847

##### III. METHODISTS IN CANADA.

The Methodist Church of Canada.....	1,173	3,537	123,013
Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada.....	247	201	23,012
Primitive Methodist Church.....	97	270	8,307
Bible Christian Church.....	81	197	7,793
British Methodist Episcopal Church (Colored).....	41	20	2,100
Total Methodists in Canada.....	1,638	4,225	164,225

##### IV. METHODISTS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND MISSIONS.

British Wesleyan Meth. Church in Great Britain.....	1,642	18,711	401,596
Missions.....	571	5,600	95,914
Primitive Methodist Church.....	1,137	15,517	183,048
New Connection Methodist.....	261	1,140	26,652
Wesleyan Reform Union.....	17	611	7,340
United Methodist Free Churches.....	430	3,501	72,714
Bible Christian Church.....	276	1,574	31,522
Total in Great Britain and Missions.....	4,334	46,903	618,722

\* The author acknowledges his obligations to the Rev. W. H. De Pay, D.D., for this and several of the following tables.





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# CHART

## SHOWING THE RATIO OF CHURCH ACCOMMODATION

TO THE TOTAL POPULATION OVER 10 YEARS OF AGE,  
WITH THE PROPORTION OF SUCH CHURCH ACCOMMODATION FURNISHED BY EACH OF  
THE LARGEST FOUR DENOMINATIONS WITHIN EACH STATE AND BY EACH OF  
THE LARGEST EIGHT DENOMINATIONS WITHIN THE UNITED STATES.

COMPILED FROM THE SOCIAL STATISTICS OF THE NINTH CENSUS, 1870.

BY FRANCIS A. WALKER.

NOTE.—The interior squares represent the proportion of the population which is provided for by the aggregate  
buildings in the churches of all denominations. The blank interval between the lined and outer squares represents  
the population for which no church accommodation is provided. When the aggregate church accommodation equals  
or exceeds the population over 10 years of age the chart is in vertical equilibrium.

PHILLIPS & HUNT, 505 Broadway, N. Y.



THE UNITED STATES.



ALABAMA.



ARKANSAS.



CALIFORNIA.



CONNECTICUT.



DELAWARE.



FLORIDA.



GEORGIA.



ILLINOIS.



INDIANA.



IOWA.





MICHIGAN.



MINNESOTA.



MISSISSIPPI.



MISSOURI.



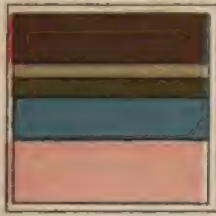
NEBRASKA.



NEVADA.



NEW HAMPSHIRE.



NEW JERSEY.



NEW YORK.



NORTH CAROLINA.



OHIO.



OREGON.



PENNSYLVANIA.



RHODE ISLAND.



SOUTH CAROLINA.



TENNESSEE.



TEXAS.



VERMONT.



VIRGINIA.



WEST VIRGINIA.



WISCONSIN.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.



NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES.



SOUTH-WEST TERRITORIES.







## V. WESLEYAN AFFILIATING CONFERENCES.

Irish Wesleyan Conference .....	251	1,800	26,206
French Wesleyan Conference .....	28	.....	1,927
Australasian Conference .....	423	1,702	66,503
Total in Wesleyan Affiliating Confs. ....	702	3,502	94,038

## RECAPITULATION.

Methodists in Churches in U. S. ....	23,950	26,597	3,434,585
" Dominion of Canada .....	1,638	4,245	164,225
" Great Britain and Missions. ....	4,344	46,983	818,792
" Affiliating Conferences .....	702	3,502	94,038
Grand total of Methodists and Miss. in 1879 ..	30,634	81,287	4,512,940

GROWTH OF WHOLE LAY MEMBERSHIP COMPARED WITH THAT OF POPULATION.—Here, also, the figures show largely to the advantage of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Instituting a comparison by taking the decades corresponding with those of the United States Census reports, we have this interesting table:—

Years.	Population.	Increase.	Gain per ct. In Population.	Gain per ct. In M. E. Ch.
1790.....	3,929,827	.....	.....	.....
1800.....	5,305,937	1,376,110	35.02	12.60
1810.....	7,239,814	1,933,887	36.45	168.96
1820.....	9,638,191	2,398,377	33.12	48.87
1830.....	12,866,020	3,227,829	33.49	83.21
1840.....	17,069,453	4,203,433	22.67	68.38
1850.....	23,191,876	6,122,423	35.87	.....
1860.....	31,443,321	8,297,685	35.78	44.20
1870.....	38,558,371	7,115,050	22.62	37.47

The figures showing the progress of the Church for the decade ending with 1850 are omitted, because, as previously noted, during that decade nearly half a million of members fell out of our count by the separation and organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It will be seen that the Methodist Episcopal Church has led the population in every decade from the beginning except one. Taking all the decades except the one in which the Southern separation was effected, the average increase in population for each decade was 32.73, while that of our Church lay membership has been 66.22, or *more than double that of the population!*

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.\*—The Methodist Episcopal Church began her reorganization in the Southern States at Athens, Tenn., June 1, 1865, New Orleans, La., Dec. 25–27, 1865, and at Charleston, S. C., April 23, 1866. From these three centers the work spread until on what was slave territory, in the sixteen Southern States, the Methodist Episcopal Church had in 1877 twenty-eight Annual Conferences, 2,126 traveling preachers, and 4,202 local preachers, of whom 947 traveling and 2,378 local preachers are colored. In these Conferences there are 4,381 Sunday-schools with 240,671 scholars, of which 2,022 schools and 96,474 scholars are among the colored people. There are 3,877 churches, valued at \$9,018,076, and parsonages valued at \$714,640; total church and parsonage property, \$9,732,716. Of these 1,751 churches and 162 parsonages, valued at \$1,868,593, are among the colored people.

Of these twenty-eight Annual Conferences fourteen are composed principally of white people and located in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Missouri, Arkansas, and Western Texas. In these are perhaps 7,000 colored out of a membership of 206,204. Covering largely the same territory and extending to all the remaining Southern States there were, in 1877, fourteen Conferences composed almost wholly of colored ministers and people. About 6,000 in these Conferences are white people out of a membership of 189,803.



The following table gives the total Church Membership and Sunday-school Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Southern States, in 1877, in the twenty-eight Annual Conferences:—

<i>Membership.</i>		<i>Sunday-schools.</i>	
Members in Full Connection.....	332,536	Number of Sunday-schools.....	4,381
Members on Probation.....	57,123	Officers and Teachers.....	32,084
Traveling Preachers.....	2,126	Scholars.....	240,671
Local Preachers.....	4,202		
Total Membership.....	396,007	Whole number enrolled.....	272,755

### THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

FOUNDED.	NAME OF INSTITUTION.	LOCATION.	PRESIDENT.	INSTRUCTORS.	STUDENTS.
1847	Boston University School of Theology.....	Boston, Mass.....	Wm. F. Warren, S.T.D., LL.D.....	14	103
1856	Garrett Biblical Institute.....	Evanston, Ill.....	Oliver Marcy.....	6	70
1864	German Wallace College (Theo. Dep't).....	Berea, Ohio.....	Wm. Nast, D.D.....	2	19
1867	Drew Theological Seminary.....	Madison, N. J.....	J. F. Hurst, D.D.....	6	104
1870	Theological Dep't of Shaw University.....	Holly Springs, Miss.....	Rev. W. W. Hooper, A.M.....	1	14
1870	Theological Dep't of Central Tenn. Coll.....	Nashville, Tenn.....	John Braden, D.D.....	2	33
1872	Centenary Biblical Institute.....	Baltimore, Md.....	Rev. J. E. Round, M.A.....	4	50
1873	Thompson Biblical Institute.....	New Orleans, La.....	W. D. Godman, D.D.....	1	15
1875	Theological Dep't of Vanderbilt Univ.....	Nashville, Tenn.....	L. C. Garland, LL.D.....	4	50
....	Baker Institute.....	Orangeburgh, S. C.....	Edward Cooke, D.D.....	2	40

**Conclusion.**—If the overflow of Methodism could be correctly stated the figures would be still more impressive. For more than a hundred years there has been a steady increase in the membership of other Churches from people converted in Methodist revivals. Whatever reasons, social, domestic, or otherwise, may have led those Methodist converts to such a course of action, their presence has been one means among several of modifying both the doctrines taught and the methods employed in those Churches with which they have united; and to so great an extent has this change taken place that, whereas for the first fifty years the itinerant preachers felt obliged to oppose the prevailing theology of America, and especially of New England, there are now few sermons heard in evangelical pulpits which might not have been preached by Methodist divines. In Methodist theology there has been no essential change: it was biblical at the outset, and ought not to change; therefore the grandly-increasing harmony among Christians of all denominations, while it is an unspeakable blessing to the whole Church, is an especial occasion of rejoicing to that body of believers whom the Head of the Church has made the chief instrument in accomplishing this result.

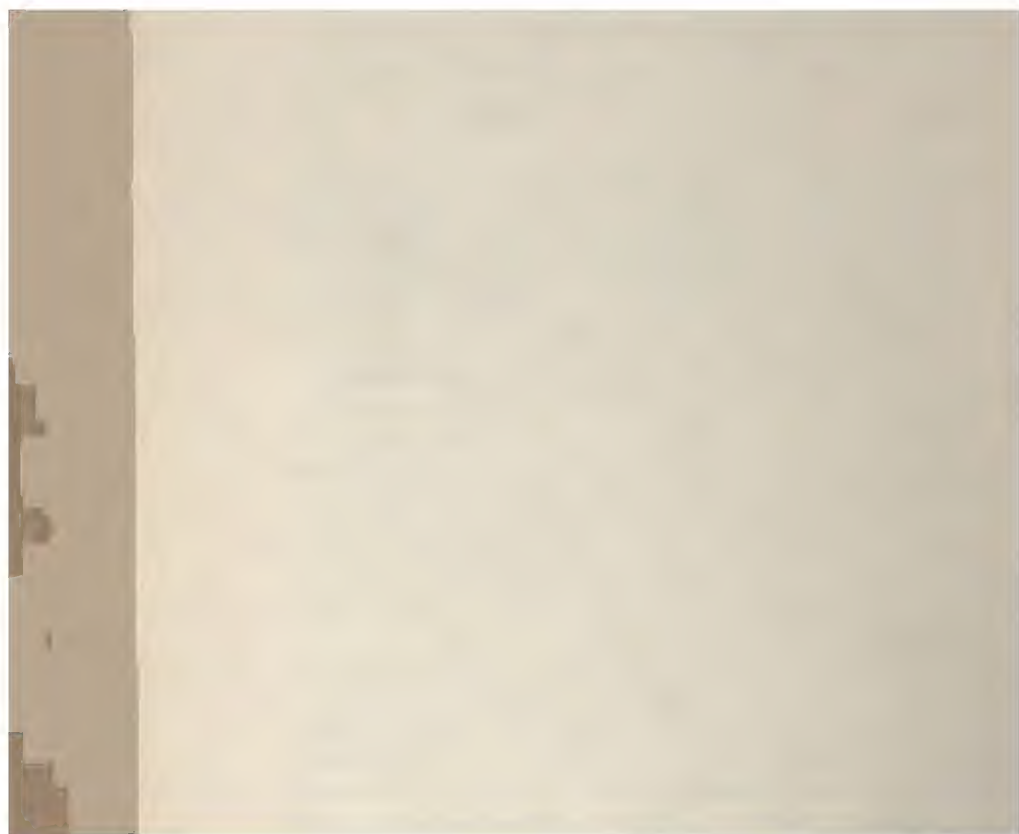
Thanks be to God for his unspeakable goodness! May he still find use for us in working out his purposes of mercy, and may he give us grace humbly to remember, that "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

THE END.

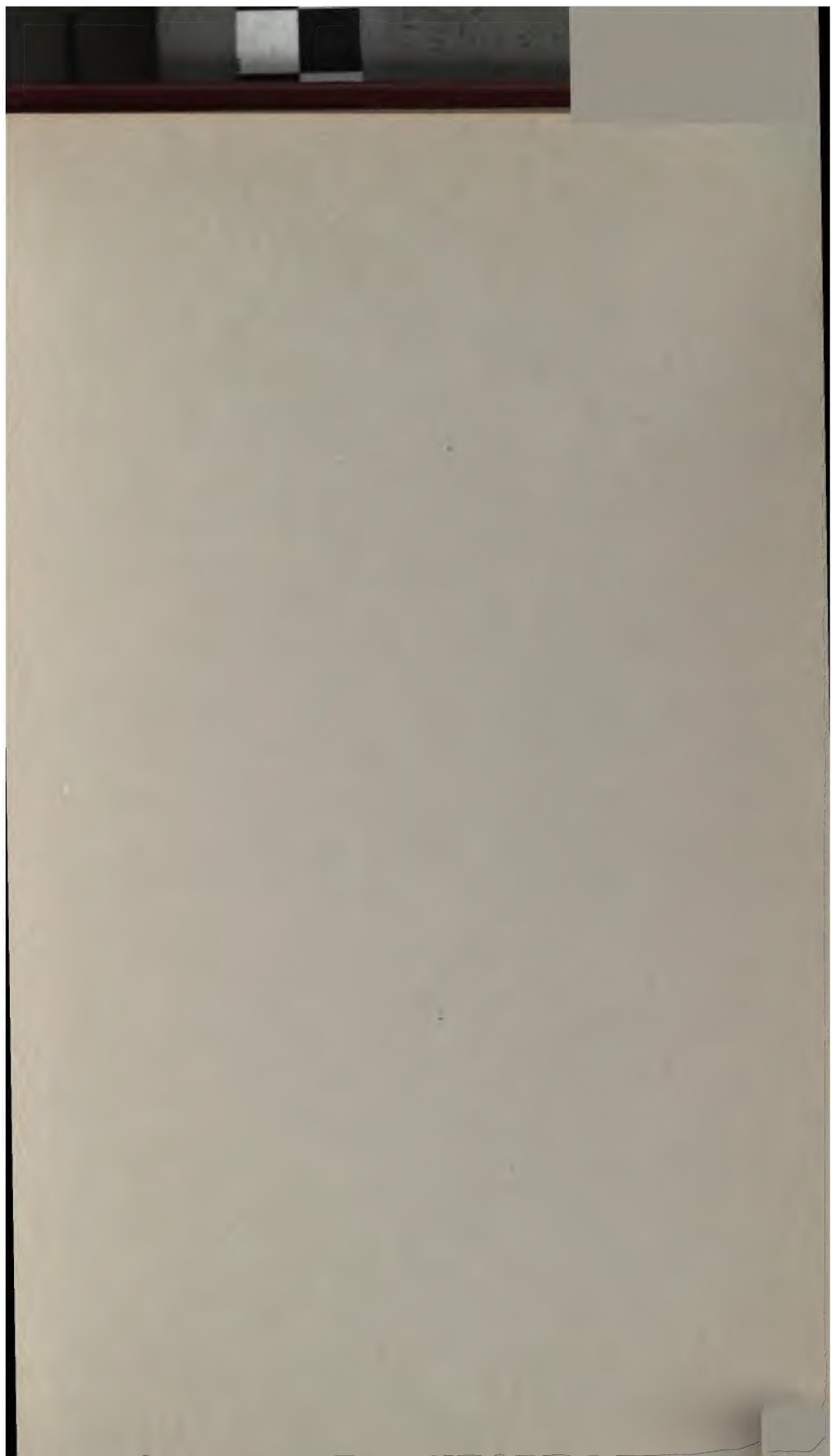




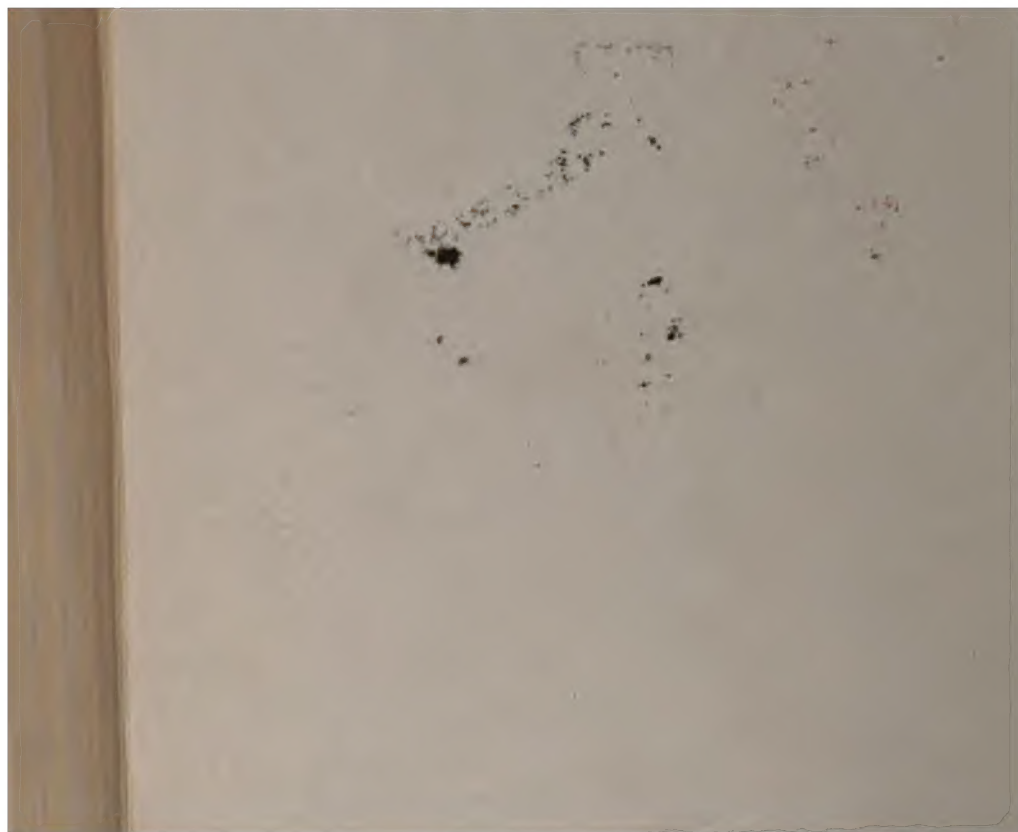














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